AUGUST 1963

Commentary

THE IRISH OF NEW YORK

A Commentary Report

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN

A MISSION TO ISRAEL: Herbert Weiner

FORTRESS AMERICA: Ronald Steel

TO BE A GOD: Allen Wheelis

BERNARD BERENSON OF BUTREMANZ: Michael Fixler

JOHN BULL & JOHN PROFUMO: John Gross

NASSER'S DECADE: Alfred Sherman

ON PAUL GOODMAN: George Steiner

RESPONSES & REACTIONS V: Norman Mailer

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Marvin Fox Richard Gilman Lewis A. Coser

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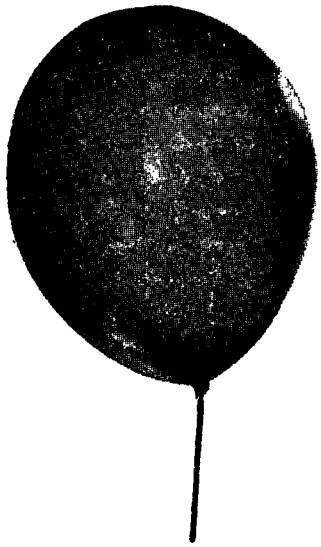

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THE IRISH OF NEW YORK

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN

IT IS NOW well over a century since any of the various groups living in New York has been able to claim so much as a bare majority of the populace; only the Jews today can claim even a quarter. There have been times, however, when one group after another established what might be termed a working hegemony: first it was the Dutch, then the English, then the Irish. The first two were simply swamped by newcomers (white Anglo-Saxons are barely 5 per cent of the current population), but the passing of the Irish era has been a more complex matter, touching on much that is central to the present turmoil in New York.

The Irish era can be said to have begun with the fall of Boss Tweed in the 1870's, but the groundwork of Irish dominance was set long before that. The politics of the city had become increasingly egalitarian through the 19th century, and the Irish working class had increasingly asserted itself. In 1868 a New York aristocrat, George Templeton Strong, commented bitterly in his diary: "Our rulers are partly American scoundrels and partly Celtic scoundrels. The Celts are predominant, however, and we submit to the rod and the sceptre of Maguires and O'Tooles and O'Shanes. . . ." But by the 70's, Strong's bitterness was already overlaid with a note of helplessness: "We are to Papistical Paddy as Cedric the Saxon to Front de Boeuf."

During the era that followed, the Irish seemed to be everywhere, involved in everything. "Slippery Dick" Connolly and "Brains" Sweeney had shared power and office with Tweed, as had any number of their followers, but with few exceptions the pre-1870's Irish had represented the canaille. With the dawning of the Gilded Age, however, middle-class and upper-class Irish began to appear; thus ranging across the social spectrum, the Irish appeared to dominate a good part of the city's life for half a century. They came to run the police force *and* the underworld; they were as evident on Wall Street as on the Bowery; Irish contractors laid out the subways and Irish laborers dug them. The City entered the era of Boss Croker of Tammany Hall and Judge Goff of the Lexow Committee which investigated him; of business leader Thomas Fortune Ryan and labor leader Peter J. McGuire; of Reform Mayor John Purroy Mitchel and Tammany Mayor "Red Mike" Hylan. It was a stimulating miscellany, reaching its height in the Roaring 20's with Al Smith and Jimmy Walker. And then, suddenly, came the crash. In June 1932 Smith was denied the Democratic renomination. The Tammany delegates left Chicago bitter and unreconciled. Two months later Mayor Walker resigned in the face of mounting scandal, and decided to leave the country with his beloved English mistress Betty. A few days before his departure, Franklin Roosevelt had been elected President. The next man to be elected Mayor of New York City would be Fiorello H. La Guardia. Then a Jew became world heavyweight champion; the new name in baseball

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN, who is currently on a leave of absence from his teaching post at the Maxwell Graduate School of Syracuse University, has been active in trade-union and public affairs. The present essay has been adapted from a section of *Beyond the Melting Pot*, a book co-authored by Mr. Moynihan and Nathan Glazer and scheduled for publication in the fall by MIT Press.

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was DiMaggio; the new crooner was Sinatra. And so it went. The almost formal end came within a decade: In 1943 Tammany Hall itself, built while Walker was Mayor at the cost of just under one million dollars, was sold to Local 91 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Tammany and the New York County Democratic Committee went their separate ways. The oldest political organization on earth was finished. So was the Irish era.

THE BASIS of Irish hegemony in the city was established by the famine emigration of 1846–1850. By mid-century there were 133,730 Irish-born inhabitants of the city, 26 per cent of the total population. By 1855, 34 per cent of the city voters were Irish. By 1890, when 80 per cent of the population of New York City was of foreign parentage, a third of these (409,924 persons out of 1,215,463) were Irish, making more than a quarter of the total population. With older stock included, over one-third of the population of New York and Brooklyn at the outset of the Gay 90's was Irish-American.

The older stock went far back in the city's history, Ireland having provided a continuing portion of the emigration to North America during the 17th and 18th centuries. Much of it was made up of Protestants with English or Scottish antecedents, but there were always some Celtic Irish, either of Protestant or Catholic persuasion. In 1683 Governor Thomas Dongan, afterward Earl of Limerick, summoned the first representative assembly in the history of the colony, at which he sponsored the Charter of Liberties and Privileges granting broad religious freedom, guaranteeing trial by jury, and establishing representative government. He was nonetheless suspected of plotting a Catholic establishment, and with the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the Catholics of New York were disfranchised and kept out of the political life of the city for almost a century.

This was a basic event, inaugurating a long tradition of denying rights to Irish Catholics on the ground that they wished to do the same to English Protestants. To this day the most fair-minded New York Protestants will caution that Irish Catholics have never experienced the great Anglo-Saxon tradition of the separation of church and state, although indeed they have experienced nothing but.

In 1798 another of the periodic native Irish revolts against the English took place, and, as usual, failed. In its aftermath came the first of a long trail of Irish revolutionaries, Catholic and Protestant, who were to disturb the peace of New York City for a century and a quarter. These were educated professional men who had risked their lives for much the same cause that had inspired the Sons of Liberty in New York a generation earlier, and on the whole they were received as such. (A few, like Dr. William J. MacNeven and Thomas Addis Emmet, became prominent New Yorkers.) Catholic emigration from Ireland also began in earnest after the Revolution, so that by the time of the great famine migration of 1848–50, a community of Irish Catholics was well enough established in New York and its basic patterns of life set. ("Honest John" Kelly, who succeeded Tweed, and W. R. Grace, of the shipping line, who became the city's first Irish-Catholic mayor, were both native New Yorkers.) The hordes that arrived at mid-century strengthened some of these patterns more than others, but they did not change them nearly so much as they were changed by them. They got off the boat to find their identity waiting for them: they were to be Irish-Catholic Democrats.

There were times when this identity took on the mysteries of the Trinity itself; the three were one and the one three. Attachment to the Democratic party came last in point of chronology, but it could have been received from the hands of Finn MacCool for the way the Irish clung to it.

TAMMANY was organized in New York a few weeks after the inauguration of Washington. The principal founder was one William Mooney, an upholsterer and apparently by birth an Irish Catholic. Originally a national organization, from the first its motif was egalitarian and nationalist: the Sons of St. Tammany, the American Indian chief, as against the foreign ties of the societies of St. George and St. David (and, indeed, of the Sons of St. Patrick), or the aristocratic airs of the Sons of the Cincinnati. Its members promptly involved

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themselves in politics, establishing the New York Democratic party. (Until recently, Tammany officially retained the Jeffersonian designation, "Democratic-Republican" party, and far into the 20th century the Phrygian cap of the French Revolution was an important prop in Tammany ceremonies.)

The original issues around which the New York political parties were organized concerned the events of the French Revolution. Jefferson and his Democratic followers were instinctively sympathetic to France. Hamilton, Jay, and the Federalists reacted with the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, designed in part to prevent the absorption of immigrants into the Jeffersonian party, but which only strengthened their attachment to it. In 1812, the Federalists bitterly but unsuccessfully opposed the establishment of more-or-less universal white suffrage, certain it would swell the immigrant Irish vote of New York City. So it did, and in no time the Irish developed a powerful voting bloc. In the 1827 city elections, a prelude to the contest between John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, the Irish sided mightily with Jackson, himself the son of poor Irish immigrants, and thereupon entered wholeheartedly into the politics of the Jacksonian era. By 1832 the Whig candidate for President found himself assuring a St. Patrick's Day dinner that "Some of my nearest and dearest friends [are] Irishmen."

The contest for the "Irish vote" became an aspect of almost every New York election that followed. A week before the election of 1884 a delegation of Protestant clergymen waited on the Republican presidential candidate James G. Blaine, at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, to assure him, in the words of Reverend Samuel D. Burchard, ". . . We are Republicans and don't propose to leave our party, and identify ourselves with the party whose antecedents have been rum, Romanism, and rebellion." Blaine, who had been making headway with the Irish, lost New York by 1,077 votes, and thereby the election, which put an end to Republican rule of post-Civil War America.

By now the New York City Irish were not only voting for the Democratic party but thoroughly controlled its organization. "The Irish role in politics," it has been said, "was creative, not imitative"—to which it may be added that it was also unprecedented in that it led to a persisting pattern of rule by men of the people. Almost to this day, the men who have run New York have talked out of the side of the mouth. There is nothing surprising in the fact that this unnatural situation should always have appalled those with-a-stake-in-the-country.

BUT THE MOST important accomplishment of the Irish in America is not political—it is religious. The Irish may have been creative about political organization, but they were also indifferent to political ideas, and therefore very little came of their hegemony in New York except a continuing series of victories at the polls. Much, however, has come of their devotion to their Church, which they have built from a despised sect of the 18th century to the largest religious organization in the nation, numbering some 43,851,500 members in 1963. In secular terms, this achievement has cost them dearly. A good part of the surplus that might have gone into family property has gone instead into building the Church—which has almost certainly inhibited the development of the solid middle-class dynasties that produce so many of the important people in America. The celibacy of the Catholic clergy has also deprived the Irish of the class of ministers' sons which has contributed notably to the prosperity and distinction of the Protestant world. And to make matters worse, these disadvantages have been reinforced by a pervasive prejudice against Catholics on the part of Protestants that has still not entirely disappeared.

The Catholic Church does not measure its success by the standards of secular society. Many of its finest men and women disappear from the great world altogether. This is well understood and accepted by Catholics. What troubles a growing number of persons within the Church is the performance of the great bulk of Catholics who remain very much a part of the secular society around them. For a Church notably committed to the processes of intellect, the weakness of Catholic scholars and writers is particularly galling. It is, for example, notorious that Catholics in America have produced hardly a handful of important

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scientists. Yet neither have they produced a great poet, a great painter, a great diplomatist. None of the arts, none of the achievements that most characterize the older Catholic societies, seem to prosper here. "Is the honorable adjective 'Roman Catholic' truly merited by America's middle-class-Jansenist Catholicism, puritanized, Calvinized, and dehydrated?" asked the Protestant Peter Viereck. What he perhaps really wanted to know is whether Irish Catholics are Roman Catholics. But it is impossible to pull the terms apart in the reality of American life, for since the early 19th century the American Catholic Church has been dominated by the Irish, and nowhere more so than in New York, the preeminent Catholic city of the nation.

Obviously, the Irish Church in America was established in the 19th century in the sense that parishes were organized and the churches built at that time. But it is also apparent that certain essential qualities of the religion itself derive from the world that followed the French Revolution. The English in the 17th and 18th centuries practically destroyed the Irish Church. The *faith* remained, but the institution virtually disappeared; Catholics had almost no churches, few clergy, hardly any organization.

The Church that grew from this beginning was something different from the historical Roman Catholic Church, not so much in theology (although there *was* a distinct Jansenist flavor) as in culture. It was a Church with a decided aversion—stemming from the French Revolution and the events of Italian unification—to the modern liberal state; it was a Church that was decidedly separatist in its attitude toward the non-Catholic community (which in America, as in Ireland, was for a long time the ascendant community); and it was a Church with almost no intellectual tradition. With all this, as Kevin Sullivan writes, "Irish Catholicism, in order to hold its own in a land dominated by an English Protestant culture, had developed many of the characteristics of English sectarianism: defensive, insular, parochial, puritanical. . . ."

It emphatically did not, however, acquire the English fondness for royalty. In a passage which Father C. J. McNaspy has said "speaks volumes," de Tocqueville noted that Father Power, pastor of St. Peter's, the first Catholic church in New York, "appears to have no prejudice against republican institutions." This was surely because republican institutions, far from disestablishing the Church, had had the effect of raising it to equality with Protestant churches. Moreover, republicanism had raised Irishmen to a kind of equality with Protestants: one man, one vote.

But accepting republicanism did not entail accepting liberalism. From the first, the Irish Catholic clergy of New York have been conservative. The revolutions of 1848, which involved European liberals in a direct physical attack on the Papacy, produced a powerful effect on the American hierarchy, and Bishop John Hughes of New York put his flock on guard against the "Red Republicans" of Europe. At this point, therefore, the Church began to find itself in conflict not only with primitive, no-Popery Protestants who burned convents, but also with liberal, educated, post-Calvinist Protestant leadership.

The divergence between liberal Protestant and Catholic views in New York grew when Catholics in the pre-Civil War period generally declined to support the movement for the abolition of Negro slavery. In the post-Civil War period, when much Protestant energy turned to the issues of social reform, the Catholic Church continued to remain apart and, in the view of many, opposed. The New York diocese was notably alert to the perils of socialism. Indeed, one widely popular priest, Father Edward McGlynn, was temporarily excommunicated in a controversy that followed his support of Henry George, who ran for mayor in 1897 on the "single tax" platform.

These developments strengthened the separatist tendencies in the Church, although again, the basic decisions had been made prior to the great migration. Foremost of these was the decision to establish a separate school system. The parochial schools, Monsignor John Tracy Ellis has suggested, swamped an incipient Catholic intellectual movement which stemmed from the educated offspring of the Maryland gentry and was powerfullly reinforced in the 1840's by the conversion of prominent Protestants, corresponding to the Oxford move-

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ment in England. Thus the American Church became more and more Irish as time went on. And as it became more Irish, its prestige declined. The Irish were the one oppressed people on earth the American Protestants could never quite bring themselves wholeheartedly to sympathize with. They would consider including insurgent Greece within the protection of the Monroe Doctrine, they would send a warship to bring the rebel Kossuth safe to the shores of liberty, they would fight a war and kill half a million men to free the Negro slaves. But the Irish were different.

"THE IRISH," wrote Macaulay, ". . . were distinguished by qualities which tend to make men interesting rather than prosperous. They were an ardent and impetuous race, easily moved to tears or laughter, to fury or to love." The Irish-American character as it finally developed was not very different from the one Macaulay described, save in two respects: it was urban and it was egalitarian. Where the Irish had been wild, they now became tough. Where they had been rebellious, it now became more a matter of being defiantly democratic. In the words of Thomas Beer, "an infinitely pugnacious, utterly common and merry animal."

Picture John Morrissey: heavyweight champion of the world, member of Congress, principal owner of the Saratoga race course, proprietor of gambling houses, husband of a famous beauty, and a leader of the "Young Democracy" that helped overthrow Tweed. In 1875 a respectable enough Mayor named Wickham, who had been elected by the new Tammany group, posted a man in his anteroom at City Hall to receive the calling cards of visitors. Shortly thereafter, Morrissey, having no card, was refused admittance to the Mayor's office. As recounted by Morris R. Werner:

> A few days later, a friend met John Morrissey in City Hall Park. He was dressed in a swallowtail coat, patent leather boots, white kid gloves, and he carried a light coat over his arm. In his other hand was a thick book. His friend, John B. Haskin, said: "Hello, John what's up now? Going to a wedding?" "No," answered Morrissey, "not so bad as that. I've just bought a French dictionary to help me talk to our dandy Mayor, I'm going in full dress to make a call, for that is now the style at the Hotel Wickham," pointing to the City Hall. "No Irish need apply now," Morrissey added.

Fifteen thousand people followed him to his grave.

Let it be said that the Irish gave style to life in the slums:

Boys and girls together, me
and Mamie O'Rorke,
Tripped the light fantastic on
the sidewalks of New York.

They became the Playboys of this new Western World. "None Can Love Like an Irishman" was a favorite song of Lincoln's day. By the turn of the century it had become equally clear that none could run like them, nor fight like them, nor drink as much, nor sing as well. When it came to diving off the Brooklyn Bridge or winning pennants for the Giants, it took an Irishman. And who could write such bittersweet songs as Victor Herbert? Or enjoy life like "Diamond Jim" Brady? All was "bliss and blarney."

Much was forgiven them. Their failures, as they themselves said of their principal one, were "a good man's weakness." A certain compassion pervaded even their wrongdoing. Jimmy Walker was nothing so much as P. T. Barnum in a speakeasy: predatory, not evil. At their best such Irish had a genius for getting through to people: no one in the history of New York has ever been able to explain state government to the voters in the way Al Smith did. Nor have they ever quite forgotten the compliment he paid their intelligence.

By degrees the Irish style of the gaslight era became less and less Irish, more and more the style of the American city. Al Smith came close to being for the people of the Lower East Side of America what Lincoln had been for the Frontier. Better still, what Jackson had been—two Irishmen, a century apart. When the comic strips began, the principal urban characters—Maggie and Jiggs, Moon Mullins, Dick Tracy—were Irish. When the movies undertook to fashion a composite picture of the American people, the New York Irishman was projected to the very center of the national image.

For whatever reason, perhaps because of the influence of New York Jews in the film

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industry, when Hollywood wanted to synthesize the Christian religion, they found it easiest to do in the person of an Irish priest: Pat O'Brien as Father Duffy in the trenches. When the tough American up from the streets had to be portrayed, the image drawn was invariably that of an Irishman. James Cagney (a New Yorker) was the quintessential figure: fists cocked, chin out, back straight, bouncing along on his heels. But also doomed: at the end of the movie he was usually dead. The contrast with Chaplin tells worlds.

And by the time the New York journalist, John O'Sullivan, coined the phrase "Manifest Destiny" as a compact apologetic for American expansionism, the Irish had also become seasoned nationalists. Their exploits, or their accounts thereof, in the Mexican and Civil Wars established the American institution of the "Fighting Irish."

Success went to their heads; it also undermined the character of many. It is to be noted, as Thomas Beer does, that "The Irish were at once established as a tremendously funny, gay, charming people and concurrently were snubbed." There was a touch of Sambo in the professional Irishman: he was willing to be welcomed on condition that he not forget his place. There was also more than a bit of mucker in the man-of-the-people pose. Derision of the highfalutin all too easily shaded into contempt for intelligence and learning, particularly on the lace-curtain fringe. The Irish were flirting with the peril Whitehead pointed to in his remark that in the conditions of the modern world the nation that does not value trained intelligence is doomed.

This was painfully manifest in the Irish-American response to the extraordinary flowering of Irish literature in the late 19th century. The emigrant Irish may have brought with them a certain peasant respect for learning—"Isle of Saints and Scholars"—but two generations in the slums of New York killed it, if it ever existed. Instead of embracing and glorying in the new literature, the New York Irish either ignored it, or if they were respectable enough, turned on the Irish authors, accusing them of using bad language. After that began a steady emigration from the Irish "community" of many of the strongest and best of the young. This migration was as devitalizing in America as it was to the Irish nation overseas.

The image changed. At the turn of the century Ireland stood for brave things. The painter John Sloan was a Scot by descent, but preferred to think otherwise: "I'm an Irishman," he would say. "Therefore I'm agin the government. . . ." But as time went on the rebel receded, the policeman loomed larger. There are, of course, no statistics or measures of this kind of movement, but the impression is overwhelming. Except for those with a strong religious vocation, the sensitive, perceptive children of the American Irish born early in the 20th century found little to commend itself to them in the culture to which they were born.

TODAY on the surface, the "Irish" in Irish-American is fast fading. A very considerable body of Irish traits and speech habits has become so thoroughly absorbed in New York culture as no longer to be regarded as Irish. And even the most visible Irish contribution to the New York scene, the Irish saloon, is vanishing, decimated by prohibition and now unable to compete with the attractions of television and the fact that Italians can cook.

Unquestionably, however, an Irish identity persists. It would seem that it now marks someone as plain, in contrast to fancy, American. In an urbane culture, Irishness has come to represent some of the qualities the honest yeoman stood for in an earlier age, notably in the undertone of toughness and practicality. "Be more Irish than Harvard," Robert Frost told the young President in 1961. But the problem with perpetuating this Irish type is that it is essentially proletarian and does not jibe with middle-class reality. Like Southern hospitality, the Irish temperament has become a tradition—valid enough, perhaps, but requiring constant reinforcement.

Three additional factors are working toward a weakening of Irish identity in America: the decline of immigration, the fading of Irish nationalism, and the relative absence of Irish cultural influence from abroad on the majority of American Irish.

A trickle of Irishmen continues to arrive in New York, but it is barely sufficient to keep the County Associations alive and to

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provide talent for and interest in the sporting events that are centered at Gaelic Park in the Bronx. And in truth, most of the recent immigrants are rather a disappointment to the American Irish, just as Ireland itself is to many Americans who go back. Few sights are more revealing than that of a second- or third-generation Irish-American tourist sitting down to his first meal, boiled in one iron pot over the open peat fire, in his grandparents' cottage. Embarrassment hangs just as heavy over the Fifth Avenue reviewing stand of the St. Patrick's Day parade. The sleek, porcine judges and contractors, all uneasy bravado, simply don't know what to make of the smallish, dour Irish officials and emissaries gathered for the occasion. Neither do the guests from Eire seem to know quite what to make of the "O'Donnell Abu," Fighting 69th, "Top O'the Marnin" goings-on. In Dublin, March 17th is a holy day, the parade is like as not devoted to the theme of industrial progress, and until recently the bars were closed.

Finally, the establishment of the Irish Free State and later the Republic of Eire, despite the Ulster issue, has substantially put an end to the agitation for Irish independence which contributed so much to the maintenance of Irish identity in America. As Whitehead said of Protestantism, so of Irish-American nationalism: "Its dogmas no longer dominate; its divisions no longer interest; its institutions no longer direct the patterns of life."

Ironically, it is precisely those persons who were most attached to the Irish cause and the Irish culture of the 19th century who are having the most difficulty maintaining such attachments in the present time. Ireland has not ceased to influence America. Contemporary American literature, in fact, can hardly be understood save in the context of Shaw, Wilde, Yeats, O'Casey, Joyce, and the like. But those who would most value their Irishness seem least able to respond to such achievements. Irish writers have been Irish indeed: Protestants, agnostics, atheists, socialists, Communists, homosexuals, drunkards, and mockers, they have had but few traits that commend themselves to the Catholic middle class. "A common drunk," Honorable James A. Comerford of the Court of Special Sessions exclaimed in announcing that the playwright Brendan Behan would not be marching in the 1961 St. Patrick's Day parade in New York.

INDICATIONS are that the Irish are now about the most evenly distributed group in New York in terms of economic and social position. They are perhaps a bit heavy on the extremes: rather more than their share of the men on the Bowery and on Wall Street, but generally about the right proportions. In this respect they are unique among the major ethnic groups in New York.

Their distribution within class strata is not nearly so even. Sean O'Faolain has reminded us that the ancient Irish had a powerful distaste for commerce; throughout history the Irish were by preference lawyers and soldiers and priests, and the pattern rather persists in the New World. The Irish are well represented in Wall Street law firms. (In one of the largest, the Irish partners were recently considering whether a quota should be imposed.) But they have shown relatively little talent as merchants, and most of those who have, have been quite overwhelmed by Jewish competition.

The principal Irish businesses in the city still tend to be family affairs, founded by working men and involving the organization of manual labor in forms that may begin small and grow larger. The Irish have also done well in contracting, real estate, and banking, where there is stress on personal qualities and the accommodation of conflicting interests, and not a little involvement in politics. So, too, the Irish talent for political bureaucracy seems to have carried over into the world of business organization. The Irish have been content to get in the long lines of the giant corporations and for some time have been popping up in the front ranks as their turn came. In the long run, their patience may prove as important a commercial asset as Jewish daring or Yankee rigor.

For the moment, however, the relevant question is not how well the Irish have succeeded, but why they have not succeeded more. The English and Dutch who preceded them in New York are now almost entirely middle- and upper-class. The Germans who accompanied them are predominantly middle-class. The Jews who followed

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them are already predominantly middle-class and may soon be exclusively so. But if the majority of the Irish have climbed out of the working class, it has been only to settle on the next highest rung.

A clue to the difference is perhaps to be found in a 1947 *Life* cover story on the "Peoples of New York." The Irish were not included among the major groups in the city but were relegated to a small block between the Rumanians and the Arabs. The picture was that of a cop, and the caption read: "Once the victims of a violent prejudice, New York's many Irish are now thoroughly assimilated. Many of them become politicians or members of the city's police force." Instead of profiting by their success in the all-but-despised roles of ward heeler and policeman, the Irish seem to have been trapped by it. As with the elder Tyrone in O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night,* they seem almost to have ruined their talent by playing one role over and over until they could do little else.

FOR Tyrone, as for his sons, so also for the race: drink has been their curse. It is the principal fact of Irishness that they have not been able to shake. A good deal of competent enquiry has still not produced much understanding of the Irish tendency to alcohol addiction. But whatever the explanation, the fact itself is indisputable, and in ways it is worse now than in the past: a stevedore could drink and do his work; a lawyer, a doctor, a legislator cannot.

It is evident enough that Irish drunkenness has given the Jews (whose alcoholism rates are as phenomenally low as those of the Irish are high) an important margin in business and the professions—it may even have tended to keep the Irish out of some of the professions. Probably, also, alcoholism partially accounts for the disappearance of the Irish from organized crime. Gambling and related activities are among the largest business activities in New York and certainly among the most profitable. With their political power, even if declining, the Irish ought to have a share of control in them, but others have completely taken over. Bookmaking, policy, and drugs are complex, serious, exacting trades. They are not jobs for heavy drinkers.

The relative failure of the New York Irish to rise socially may also be related to the Irish success in politics. A case, at any rate, can be made that, contrary to the general impression, politics is not a lucrative calling. This case would be more confirmed than contradicted by the periodic scandals that reveal the large amounts of graft and benefactions passed between politicians and various legitimate and illegitimate businessmen: the politicians are often as not on their way to jail. The secret of the long tenure of many of the better-known Irish politicians is that they were honest men by any standards, and certainly by the American standards of their time.

Even were the Irish rising faster socially and economically than they seem to be, the first impression would still be one of decline. People disappear into the lower-middle class, to emerge, if ever, only years or generations later, in the upper reaches of achievement. In the interval, they are outdistanced in the areas of popular achievement, which are particularly visible in an age of mass media. This has been painfully obvious for the Irish in New York, which is the center of the nation's entertainment industry and thereby the center of most of the popular arts. In the past thirty years, the Irish fighters and ballplayers have gone down before Negroes and Italians. The Irish crooners have been driven out by Italians. Most of the popular comedians are Jewish. The best of the musicians are Negro.

A similar, if more complex, process is at work in the trade-union movement. The most important of the working-class leaders of the city, from Gompers to Dubinsky, have emerged from the Jewish socialist tradition (Peter McGuire and George Meany excepted). This tradition, however, has about played itself out; the Jews have left the working class, and Jewish liberals have largely turned their interests elsewhere. During all this time, the bulk of the trade-union leadership, notably in the craft unions, has been Irish. This leadership continues with a diminished, but by no means vanished ethnic base. Of late the leadership has even been revived by the influence of Catholic ideological movements, symbolized in New York by the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, and the various church-related labor schools. It is likely that Irish influence in this area will continue for some time.

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In their classic stronghold, the police force, the Irish have been forced to set up a society to protect their interests. For some time ethnic groups in the New York police, as in many of the city bureaucracies —and, indeed, in the life of the city generally—have maintained fraternal organizations. The Italians were first to organize on an ethnic basis within the Police Department. In the 1930's they were followed by Jews, the white Protestants, the black Protestants, the Puerto Ricans, and the Poles. For a long while, the Irish were so dominant that it would have seemed ludicrous for them to organize. But by 1952 it was obvious that those days were passing; the Irish still had a majority of the force, but no longer a majority of the police academy, and so they set up the Emerald Society and took their place among the other minorities.

Turning lower-middle-class is a painful process for a group like the Irish who, as stevedores and truck drivers, made such a grand thing of Saturday night. Most prize fighters and a good many saloon fighters die in the gutter—but they have moments of glory unknown to accountants. Most Irish laborers died penniless, but they had been rich one night a week much of their lives, whereas their white-collar children never know a moment of financial peace, much less affluence. A good deal of color goes out of life when a group begins to rise. A good deal of resentment enters.

The cumulative effect of this process has been to produce among a great many Irish a powerful sense of displacement. It is summed up in a phrase they will use on hearing an Irish name or on being introduced to another Irishman. "There are some of us left," they say. One could be in Connaught in the 17th century.

THE SENSE OF displacement is nowhere more acute than in politics. The basic cause of the decline of the political power of the Irish has been their decline as a proportion of the population. Where they accounted for a third of the population of the city in 1890, they are probably no more than one-tenth today. Many of the Irish who remain in the city have become Republicans, thus splitting the Irish vote, and of those who are still Democrats, a great many have been at odds with the prevailing ideology within their party.

The main thrust of Irish political activity has always been moderate or conservative in New York, but until recently it has not been articulately so. There is a well-known story about the Tammany 4th of July fete at which a reporter asked why "Mister" Murphy had not joined in singing "The Star-Spangled Banner." "Maybe," came the reply, "he didn't want to commit himself." The functioning urban politician does not commit himself; he negotiates with the commitments of others. This came naturally to the Irish, who were the least encumbered of peoples with abstract notions about municipal ownership and trade-union rights. And Tammany conservatism has also been reinforced by the political developments which from the beginning of the Irish era to the present have kept the New York Democratic party isolated from that party in the rest of the country.

The crucial turning point was the rejection of Al Smith, first by his country and then by the Democrats themselves. The New York Irish gave their hearts to Smith, who was an Irish figure whatever his ancestry. He was in no sense a product of the slum, but rather a representative of a distinct New York urban culture that to this day asserts its own manner of speech and dress in a society otherwise overwhelmed by Brooks Brothers. Smith had not the slightest qualms about the adequacy of his education; it was hyperbole, and perhaps a sense of mockery, that led him to tell the New York State Assembly that he was a graduate, not of Yale, but of the Fulton Fish Market. He was the greatest state governor of his generation, perhaps of the century, but he was without the pomposity of Good Government. When he declared, "No matter how you slice it, it's still baloney," he seemed to strip the establishment of all the pretense and posture designed to keep the Irish and such in their places.

The bitter anti-Catholicism and the crushing defeat of the 1928 campaign came as a blow. The New York Irish had been running their city for a long time, or so it seemed. They did not think of themselves as immigrants and interlopers with an alien religion; it was a shock to find that so much of the country did. Worse yet, in

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1932, when the chance came to redress this wrong, the Democrats, rather than renominating Smith, turned instead to a Hudson Valley aristocrat with a Harvard accent who had established his reputation by blocking Murphy's nomination of "Blue-eyed Billy" Sheehan for the U. S. Senate, and was soon to enhance it by getting rid of Jimmy Walker.

The main effect of the New Deal in the upper reaches of the Irish community in New York was to reveal to its members that while they had been rising socially and economically, the Democratic party as a whole remained an organization of the masses. It rarely occurred to the Irish to stop being Democrats because they had become bankers, or whatever. The party was an ethnic and religious alliance, as much as an economic one. Irish businessmen hated Roosevelt as did other businesmen, but with the special twist that they felt it was their own political party, overcome by alien influences (i.e. the old Protestant establishment) that was causing the trouble.

Al Smith openly endorsed the Republican candidate for the Presidency in 1936. In a major address to an enthusiastic New York City audience he accused Roosevelt of preparing the way for a Communist-controlled America. The feeling of displacement is painfully evident. He told a Chicago audience that Jeffersonian Democrats were "out on a limb today, holding the bag, driven out of the party, because some new bunch that nobody ever heard of in their life before came in and took charge of things and started planning everything." Four years later, when Jim Farley—who had hoped to succeed Roosevelt, only in the end to be pushed aside—broke with FDR, the Irish conservatives became even more united in opposition.

THE DECADE and a half that followed was not an easy one for the Catholic Irish. Disdained on the left as reactionaries because of their violent opposition to the Soviet Union, they were not really welcomed by the Protestant establishment, whose interests they sought to preserve. Even today if Catholics are admitted to have been profoundly right about Russian Communism, the suspicion is widely shared among non-Catholics that they were right for the wrong reasons. Two decades ago it was not even clear they were right.

The crisis came in the years immediately after the Second World War when evidence began to accumulate about the true nature of the Communist conspiracy. Alger Hiss and Owen Lattimore and the Rosenbergs seemed proof enough for anybody—but not for a good number of persons in the Protestant-Jewish intellectual elite. This is the context in which the New York Irish turned overwhelmingly to the support of Senator McCarthy. But a clue to the nature of McCarthy's influence on the New York Irish is that from start to finish he got his largest response from them not when he attacked Communism but when he attacked the institutions of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant establishment. It was Harvard University and the State Department and the United States Army that seemed to be subverting the country. The faculty of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's college was riddled with Reds. Dean Gooderham Acheson would not turn his back on spies in the Foreign Service. George Catlett Marshall was a front man for traitors.

McCarthy finally let the Irish down. He ended up a stumblebum lurching about the corridors of the Senate where it had been decided that he was no gentleman. This left the Irish to defend a reputation that had become, in practical terms, indefensible. Yet the Irish achieved a strong temporary advantage from the McCarthy period that may or may not prove of permanent value. In the era of security clearances, to be an Irish Catholic became *prima facie* evidence of loyalty. Harvard men were to be checked; Fordham men would do the checking. There was also a disadvantage in this, however, for it put the Irish back on the force, encouraging their tendency to be regular rather than creative.

In 1960, when, for the second time, an Irish Catholic ran for President, it turned out that for many the estrangement from the Democratic party had gone too deep to be overcome by more primitive appeals. Alfred E. Smith, Jr., announced he was voting for Nixon. In fashionable Greenwich, Connecticut, the grandson of John H. McCooey of Brooklyn turned up ringing doorbells for the straight Republican ticket. Kennedy probably got little more than a

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bare majority of the Irish vote in New York City. And it appears it was the Jewish students in the Fordham School of Pharmacy who saved that ancient Jesuit institution from going on record as opposed to the election of the first Catholic President of the United States.

WITHIN the New York Democratic party itself, the estrangement between the Irish organization leaders and the growing Jewish and Protestant liberal middle class, which intensified during the McCarthy period, became open warfare after Stevenson's defeat in 1952 turned the attention of the latter group to local politics. Manhattan erupted in a series of Democratic primary fights in which the liberals set out to unseat the old guard Irish incumbents.

One by one the Irish district leaders were defeated. When this process had about run its course, the reformers turned on the leader of Tammany itself, Carmine De Sapio, accusing him of being a boss, which was of course his proper function in the traditional system. The Tammany leader's position was, as always, ideologically indefensible. Unfortunately for De Sapio, it was now also ecologically untenable: middle-class voters were pouring into his district and had begun to operate within the regular party system. Forced to choose between increasingly hostile forces, Mayor Robert F. Wagner came down on the side of the reformers, whereupon De Sapio in the classic manner set out to deny him renomination. Except perhaps for the Negro areas of the city, the primary contest that followed was bitter and pitiless in contrasting the appeals of the traditional, neighborhood-oriented party organization with the modern, mass-media-oriented, liberal establishment. "If Wagner wins," said one party leader, "you can close down every clubhouse in the city." Wagner won overwhelmingly.

It may be that the Wagner victory put an end to the Irish political system itself in New York, just as La Guardia in the 1930's had broken the hold of the Irish on the system. Wagner's victory was a triumph of middle- and upper-class political initiative, organization, and leadership over the traditional conservative, working-class party. It was uniquely a victory of public-opinion experts, communication specialists, and theoreticians allied with a *haute bourgeoisie* whose liberalism and genuine concern for the poor of the city were nonetheless combined with something very like an old-fashioned Tory will-to-power. Tammany disciplined the masses and enabled them to rule. With that discipline broken, it is likely that New York will revert to the normal municipal condition of rule by the centers of economic power in alliance with the communications media. Organized crime will probably persist as one such center and may even grow more important. There are indications that the powerful political machines of the Tammany variety were the one social force capable of controlling organized crime—certainly the decline of Tammany was accompanied by the rise of Costello and the like—and it may well be that the future will see the liberal middle class and the criminal syndicates sharing power in a pattern that was already to be perceived during La Guardia's ascendancy.

If this should happen, the Irish will have a role to play, for they have in significant numbers joined the middle and upper classes. A number of new Irish faces appeared in the ranks of the reformers, indistinguishable in most respects from their Jewish and Protestant counterparts, and helped perhaps by a tradition of being "politicans." Sharing honors of primary day with Robert F. Wagner of Yale was James S. Lanigan of Harvard, who defeated De Sapio for district leader in Greenwich Village. The Irish liberals lack, for the moment at least, an ethnic constituency, but they are not for that the less sensitive to the changed style of politics. "The old-line political club," said one reformer, "is concerned with individuals, getting a job for this one or doing a favor for that one. In our modern society, politicians have to deal with the problems of whole groups of people, and we reformers are concerned more with groups than with individuals." The speaker was Peter P. Meagher, running for district leader on the West Side of Manhattan against the son of The McManus.

BUT THE future of the Irish in New York politics is not a strictly political question. Much will depend on events within the Catholic Church, which is now entering a

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new phase both for the clerics and the laity.

Some time prior to the 1928 campaign the *Atlantic Monthly* published a statement by an Episcopalian layman directed to Al Smith which, citing papal encyclicals and canon law, challenged the compatibility of Smith's religion with his loyalty to the United States Constitution. It was clear to Smith's advisors, who gathered to discuss it, that the Governor would have to answer this challenge, but Smith himself was most reluctant. Hurt and dismayed, he said to Judge Joseph M. Proskauer (as reported by his daughter):

> Joe . . . to tell you the truth . . . I don't know what the words mean. I've been a Catholic all my life—a devout Catholic, I believe—and I never heard of these encyclicals and papal bulls and books that he writes about. They have nothing to do with being a Catholic, and I just don't know how to answer such a thing.

According to Reinhold Niebuhr's version of the meeting, which may be more accurate in spirit, Smith simply entered the room and asked all present, "Will someone tell me what the hell a papal encyclical is?"

This kind of thing is passing. It is hard to conceive of an American Catholic of the future becoming a candidate for President of the United States without having acquired a fairly sophisticated understanding of Catholic dogma on the subject of the relations of church and state. Nor is it likely that henceforth the prelates of the American Church will be drawn so preponderantly as they have heretofore been from the lower-middle class. But the one social characteristic of the present New York Church which does not seem likely to change during the next generation is its Irishness. Of the eighteen bishops in the New York area, in 1961, one was Chinese, one was Italian, and the rest were Irish. And in contrast to the police academy and the legislature, in the seminaries the Irish are holding their own.

The Catholic Church in New York during the remainder of this century will be characterized by an increasingly articulate and inquiring laity, ministered to by a steadily more sophisticated, predominantly Irish clergy. But the role of the Church in the life of the city is as yet uncertain. It will be determined by two things: first, the course of Catholic education and intellectual life; second, the attitude of the Church toward social change.

THERE IS nothing in the history of organized religion comparable to the effort of the American Catholic Church to maintain a complete, comprehensive educational system ranging from the most elementary tutelage to the most advanced disciplines. The effort absorbs so much of the energies and resources of the faithful as to prompt the remark of a New York Jesuit that a Catholic diocese is a school system here and there associated with a church. Lately, however, the strain on resources has become all but intolerable, while serious misgivings have arisen as to the value of the end product.

Encouraged by the growing proportion of educated Catholics and much stimulated by the renaissance of Catholic thought in Europe, American Catholic intellectual life is going through, in the words of one nun, "an orgy of self-criticism." (Fortunately, as Reverend Gustav Weigel, S.J., writes, "non-Catholics have politely and wisely kept out of the debate.") The most widely discussed statement of the issue appeared in 1955 in the Fordham quarterly *Thought*. It was written by Monsignor John Tracy Ellis. Msgr. Ellis began with Denis Brogan's statement that "in no Western society is the intellectual prestige of Catholicism lower than in the country where, in such respects as wealth, numbers, and strength of organization, it is so powerful." "No well-informed Catholic," said Monsignor Ellis, "will attempt to challenge that statement." And he was particularly concerned with the studies that showed the abysmal performance of Catholics and Catholic institutions in scientific work. Two years earlier, Reverend Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, S.J., of Fordham, in the presidential address of the American Catholic Sociological Society, had said, on the same subject, "If this is true for the physical sciences, I would not hesitate to assert that it is more true of the social sciences." Father Weigel has put the matter even more succinctly. In a paper presented to the Catholic Commission on Intellectual and Cultural Affairs, the group that has stimulated much of this discussion, he declared: "The postulate of all scholarly investigation is the nagging existence of mys-

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tery. The training of not a few young Catholics makes them believe that there is no mystery."

Apart from a spate of defensive articles on "Great Catholic Intellectuals," there has been surprisingly little dissent on these estimates. On the other hand, the act of asserting the lack of Catholic intellectual standards is the first step in establishing them. The Catholic world is in fact astir with intellectual aspiration that carries with it the possibility of great achievement.

The realization of this possibility will depend largely on the quality of the education Catholics receive in the coming generation. Despite evidence that parochial schools get a good quality student, the end results have simply not been good enough. And evidence also exists to show that some of the better Catholic students have been avoiding competition in the tougher non-Catholic schools, with a resulting isolation that feeds on itself. Without question, Catholic education came to a moment of crisis by the early 1960's.

There are three elements to this crisis. First, the Catholics have a large and rapidly growing population. Second, it is the teaching of the Church and the wish of most of the laity that Catholic children should be educated in Catholic schools. Third, if this education is to meet their rising intellectual and social requirements, the already crushing cost will grow much greater; this leads to an increasingly adamant demand that in one way or another an end be put to the "double taxation" of Catholics in the field of education.

The cost of the Catholic school system in New York City is by any standards staggering. In 1960 in the dioceses of Brooklyn and New York (excluding those parts outside the city) there were some 360,000 students in Catholic elementary and secondary schools. This was 37 per cent of the enrollment of the public schools: a proportion hardly changed from the 1840's. Moreover, the dioceses maintain eighteen colleges and universities, with some 30,000 students. The operating expenses of the city public schools came to $650,000,000 in 1960, on top of which was the cost of the city colleges. The Catholic population of the city, barely a median income group, pay their share of the taxes that support the public schools in addition to the full cost of the Catholic education system.

The Catholics manage this by sacrifice and by what appears to be a high level of managerial efficiency. (The cost per pupil of Catholic elementary schools in New York. is not one-third that of the public schools.) But there is a limit to such possibilities, and when that limit is reached, as it almost surely has been in some respects, the disparity in costs creates a difference in quality as well. In a period of rising intellectual expectations, this fact has led inevitably to active dissatisfaction with the existing arrangement under which Catholic schools are denied all but marginal public assistance.

The present prospects for public assistance to parochial schools are at best doubtful. The basic problem is that Catholics have failed to persuade any significant number of non-Catholic opinion leaders of the justice of their case (although this may be changing, as evidenced by Walter Lippmann's recent pronouncement). In New York, Catholic spokesmen have not yet been able to couch the issue in terms that have appeal, even perhaps meaning, for many Jewish or Protestant spokesmen; nor have they succeeded in providing Catholics in public and party office with any very coherent understanding of the problem. This is itself a measure of Catholic isolation from the liberal secular tradition of the city that is epitomized by the New York *Times*.

If an accommodation is reached on the school issue, there is likely to be some diminution of Catholic defensiveness of the kind that led Heywood Broun to call the New York Irish "the cry babies of the Western world." This defensiveness can be particularly destructive on the issue of Communist subversion and American loyalty. New York Catholics have been prone to think they have learned something when the leader of Tammany Hall informs a communion breakfast of the Sanitation Department Holy Name Society that "there is no Mother's Day behind the Iron Curtain." When a number of the leading universities of the nation announced their opposition to the loyalty oath provisions of the National Defense Education Act of 1958, Catholic newspapers all over the country, as one disgusted Catholic scientist put it, "proudly displayed

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front-page stories in which they told how Catholic students in Catholic colleges virtually demanded loyalty oaths. . . ." This is at best a curious posture for members of a Church whose principal effort in American society has been to limit the role of the state in education.

The announcement in 1961 by the head of the John Birch Society that half his membership was Catholic—whether or not true—caused a stir in Catholic circles, as did the rise of the radical right in general in the post-Eisenhower period. Elements within the Church appeared to realize how uncritical and remote from reality large sections of lay opinion had become. There followed a series of lucid and eloquent statements denouncing extremist organizations and expounding the bases of effective anti-Communism. But whether the minds of those concerned had been conditioned beyond the reach of appeals to reason remained to be seen.

The excesses of Catholic militancy are producing a reaction among the laity as well. For although New York has for long been a center of clerical conservatism in the Catholic Church, it is also a center of Catholic intellectual activity that tends to "liberal" views in about the same proportion and along the same lines as intellectual opinion generally. The isolation of the Catholic community is rapidly breaking down as the great issues of the 1930's and 1940's recede. The passing of the Franco regime in Spain will remove a time-honored source of misunderstanding, bitterness, and bona fide hostility. The expulsion of Communism from the power centers of American life has been acknowledged in most Catholic circles, while the appearance of Communism in Latin America must give Catholics pause in their assumptions about the process of Marxist subversion: no Protestant country has yet gone Communist. Increasingly, the prospect is that the various elements of Catholic opinion—liberal, conservative, radical—will merge with corresponding elements in non-Catholic groups, at one and the same time expanding the area of Catholic influence and diminishing the influence of the Catholic bloc. The strong likelihood, therefore, is that the future will see Catholic opinion becoming increasingly variegated, and reflecting the widely divergent views of a community that spans a broad social and ethnic spectrum.

In 1962, some seven years after his widely read assessment of Catholic intellectual life, Monsignor John Tracy Ellis turned his attention to a potentially more dangerous possibility: that the emergence of an intellectually trained and vigorous Catholic laity would bring with it "the curse of anti-clericalism." Already there was to be encountered "severe criticism of bishops and priests among the intellectuals and professional people."

This represented, of course, an almost entirely new situation for the American Catholic Church, reflecting the increased numbers of highly educated Catholics, but also the increasing intellectual stature of the Church itself. Whereas in the past a disgruntled Catholic intellectual in Protestant-secular America would at a certain point simply leave the Church, there now emerged the possibility of remaining Catholic but becoming anti-clerical.

Monsignor Ellis spoke with great feeling of the only solution he could envisage:

> . . . the laymen must be freed to speak and to act without hindrance on the vital problems that press for solution outside the realm of doctrine. If they are not given such freedom the superior training and education of which they are the recipients in rapidly mounting numbers will have been—insofar as the Church is concerned—largely wasted, and the Church itself will be exposed to the very real threat of having the laymen's repressed zeal and frustrated ambitions for the Mystical Body turned into a disillusionment and embitterment that will breed in our land the kind of spirit that has poisoned the relations of clergy and laity in so much of western Europe and in Latin America.

The prospects for dissension within the Catholic community are strongest in the area of social policy, although here the structure most likely will be that of liberal clergy *and* laity combining in opposition to their conservative counterparts. Since the time of *Rerum Novarum* (1891) Catholic social doctrine has stood against many of the most cherished economic doctrines of American conservatism. However, this fact has, as it were, only gradually come to light.

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(It may be that semantics is in part to blame: Catholic spokesmen have used the term "liberal" to refer to *laissez-faire* economics of the Manchester school, which they have warmly denounced. However, Catholic and non-Catholic audiences alike would seem generally to have understood the term in its contemporary American reference to non-*laissez-faire* views.) With the promulgation of the papal encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), and more drastically, with the late Pope John's *Mater et Magistra,* the American Catholic Church found itself committed to a systematic social doctrine that was almost certainly far to the left of the social thinking of most American Catholics, clergy and laity alike.

ALTHOUGH most Catholic intellectuals will almost certainly associate themselves with the main body of American liberal opinion, Catholics are likely to have their most significant impact on conservative thought. American conservatism has for a century been notably inarticulate. Whatever Catholic doctrine might be, the generation of Irish Catholics now being educated has been steeped in conservative social feeling both at home and in their formal education. This sets them apart from any large group in America outside the South, save possibly the less numerous German Catholics. If the education of these Catholics is good enough, they will have the opportunity to create a sustained and comprehensive body of conservative thought in the United States based on the Catholic doctrine of the rights and responsibilities of the individual, the limitations on the power of the state, and the transcendent purpose of the social order, combined with a scholastic respect for intellect.

But there is a limit to the uses of conjecture. The future of the New York Irish will be determined by forces greater than any they may generate themselves. The decisive question is the course of organized religion in an increasingly non-religious culture. The short-run prospect of considerable interdenominational strain could just as suddenly yield to a Protestant-Catholic-Jewish entente in the face of assertive secular pressures. Clearly, the era of Irish hegemony in the city is past, but so also is their isolation. A new era is upon them, one which may be said to have begun on the day the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain were photographed at the rail of the Presidential yacht, standing above a large life preserver on which was emblazoned "Honey Fitz—Washington, D.C."

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HERBERT WEINER

A MISSION TO ISRAEL

Jerusalem, July 1962.

I'M ABOUT to be unmasked. It started last night at the house of Reb David Cohen, "the Nazarite" as he is called here, because of the vows he has taken to refrain from cutting his hair, drinking wine, or speaking on the Sabbath. We had just finished a lesson in Rabbi Kuk's *The Lights of Holiness* when a short, balding man pushed his way through the crowded dining room that serves as a combination synagogue and classroom. As he stood there, whispering to the Nazarite and nodding in my direction, I knew the conversation had to do with the announcement this week that I am to be the first Administrator of the Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem—a "missionary," according to the Orthodox press, bearing a brand of Judaism even more dangerous than Christianity. I suppose I'll soon be frozen out of these sessions at Reb David's home and I'll miss them, for the Nazarite is the man who edited and arranged most of the books of Abraham Isaac Kuk, the first Chief Rabbi of Palestine. But I am even more concerned about the reaction of Zvi Yehudah Kuk, the son of the former Chief Rabbi. The next time I go there will somebody whisper to him, too, and say that a Reform Rabbi who studies with Zvi Yehudah Kuk is for that reason even more dangerous?

* * *

"I'M GLAD you've come. We must fight the Orthodox," a leader of the Reform movement in the U.S. told me yesterday at the King David Hotel. "We've got to break this combination of church and state."

Should I have informed him then and there in the bustling hotel lobby that I haven't the slightest desire to fight the Orthodox? That usually I find more spiritual authenticity in a decrepit synagogue in the Meah Shearim quarter than in a dozen convocations of clean-smelling, well-dressed liberal Jews at the Fontainebleau in Miami? That establishing Liberal Judaism here has very little to do with the doctrine of the separation of church and state?

Explanations and qualifications do no good. There is no point in my continued protests that the Hebrew Union College School for Bible and Archaeology has as its aim nothing more (at least so far) than setting up a program for graduate studies. No one, either in Israel or in the U.S., takes this claim at face value. Here the project is looked upon with deep suspicion as a tactical move—the first action in a campaign to establish a "beachhead for the Reform movement in Israel" (otherwise, "Why did they build a synagogue in the school?"). The truth is that I *am* supposed to do "something" about the religious situation here. But what? Nobody has told me, and I myself don't know.

October.

MY CHILDREN are having their troubles in "adjusting" to Israel, and I'm afraid inspirational talks about the land's Biblical associations don't help. My eldest, a seven-year-old boy, and my six-year-old girl go to a *tzrif*—a two-classroom shack which is the public school of our neighborhood. The boy, who knows a bit of Hebrew, is making a valiant attempt to catch a few words in class and stays after hours trying to copy

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his assignments from the blackboard. The six-year-old girl sits in her class with utter incomprehension and pours herself with pathetic energy into the color drawings. The four-year-old has withdrawn completely, despite the efforts of the teacher. When she gets home, it takes a while before she even begins speaking English.

Anyone who wants to learn about basic human needs ought to watch children who have lost the power to communicate. And communication is *the* problem here, where large segments of the population cannot converse with each other—except in the most limited way. No wonder tempers are short.

* * *

LAST NIGHT I took my family to meet Zvi Yehudah Kuk in the small room where we had spent so many hours talking about his father's ideas. Again, the problem of communication. But something came through —the warmth and utter sincerity of this white-bearded rabbi with the twinkling brown eyes. He told them a story based on the Biblical portion of the week—and it didn't seem the occasion to explain why I had come to Israel. But I must tell him soon, before somebody else does.

November.

WE ATTENDED Friday evening services at the Liberal congregation in Jerusalem last night. What can be the matter? The prayers were orderly, dignified—and boring. It's not the fault of the rabbi, who is learned and capable, nor of the congregation, which chants loudly and in perfect unison—as if displaying its accomplishments to the visitors. Strange how aesthetic effects, so natural in a congregation outside of Israel, are here so painfully out of place. That goes for the organ, the black robes of the rabbi, the pastoral greeting of synagogue functionaries as they stand at the doorway when the congregation leaves—all perfectly acceptable in France or America, but not here. Six years ago I convened the first meeting of these "Circles for Progressive Judaism," as they call themselves. Now there are three Liberal congregations in the country —one in Jerusalem, one in Kfar Shmaryahu near Tel Aviv, and the third in Nazareth. Haifa has a congregation associated with the Conservative movement, though here where the service is completely in Hebrew, distinctions between "Reform" and "Conservative" are quite meaningless.

None of these congregations seems to attract the native-born element of the population. The sabra peeks in curiously now and then, but he doesn't come back. The leaders wonder what can be done to make the services more attractive. More changes in the prayer book? A better organ? A nicer building? I doubt it. The only thing that will ever attract the native-born Israeli to the synagogue is the sense that what is being said and done there is real—the sense of God real, the prayers real, the effect on the congregation real.

Anyway, I've found a little synagogue on a winding side street not far from our house. It's terribly dirty. By afternoon, the stench of the urinals—the water is evidently not flushed on the Sabbath—becomes almost unbearable. But I try to sit near the windows and I'm happy. The synagogue consists of five small rooms, each with its own Ark and variety of prayer book. Thus, there are five congregations praying simultaneously every day. On the Sabbath, a sixth prayer-quorum made up of latecomers takes its place in the hallway. The result is a startling mixture of accents, costumes, and faces. There are Hasidim in the yellow caftans that proclaim descent from old Jerusalem families; Sephardic Jews in black conical hats and striped Arab-style robes; blond ear-locked children running about with darker little descendants of the "eastern" communities; and a sprinkling of European immigrant types.

I like it, but I can't get my children to the six-in-one synagogue, as they call it. The crowding, the disorder, the smells are too much for their suburban American upbringing. What is it about our Judaism that insists on associating the "authentic" with bad smells, and "sterility" with decorum and cleanliness? A fine question for the Administrator of a shining outpost of Liberal Judaism.

* * *

I KNEW, of course, that things would change when Zvi Yehudah Kuk found out, but I had been hoping that his father's well-known love even for atheistic pioneers would ex-

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tend to a Reform rabbi in Israel. It was evening, we had just finished a class in the *Kuzari* of Yehudah Halevi, and I began my confession hesitantly, first saying that I hoped we could still be friends after he had heard me out.

As I talked, his face grew more and more serious. The school, I kept saying, was nothing more than a school, and I concluded lamely, "They could have sent somebody worse." He did not appear convinced. Our friendship, to be sure, would remain unchanged, but as for the Hebrew Union College—its work would "require clarification." Nevertheless, Zvi Yehudah did seem to be relieved when I assured him I had no plans for forming an Israeli congregation, and we parted with the usual warm handshake.

Two days later, one of the boys from the yeshivah told me that Rabbi Kuk wished to see me. I came to his house the next evening with apprehension, and I was right. He had undoubtedly conferred with others in the interim, for he no longer patted my hand or sat close to me as we talked. Instead, he read me some paragraphs from two letters his father had written. One was to an Orthodox Jew in Australia who had asked for advice. There were two synagogues in his town, the Australian Jew explained —one Orthodox where the sexes were separated, and the other traditional, but with mixed seating. The rabbi of the Orthodox congregation was, however, a public desecrator of the Sabbath and a man known to be unobservant. What the Australian Jew had wanted to know was whether he should continue to attend the Orthodox synagogue despite the blatant hypocrisy of the rabbi, or join the other congregation. Rav Kuk's answer had been unequivocal: Any attempt to seat men and women together was absolutely forbidden! The second letter was even stronger in tone, denouncing the spreading "plague" of organs in synagogue services.

Though I had never had any illusions about the elder Rabbi Kuk's feelings on such matters, I was taken aback by the violence of the language. This was an aspect of Kuk that I had not come across before. His son must have sensed my shock, for he made an effort to explain. Reform Judaism, he said, has its place outside Israel, in the *galut*, but never here, in Jerusalem, at the Center. His voice trembled at the thought. It was a historic fact, moreover, that the Reform movement had been responsible for the assimilation of large Jewish communities in Europe. I had no opportunity to ask why, in that case, there was such religious indifference in Israel which, up until now, had never known Reform.

It was clear that Zvi Yehudah was not interested that evening in hearing my opinions. But later I did ask him what he thought of the controversy over the B'nai Israel, the Indian Jews who had emigrated to Israel at the urging of the Jewish Agency, and who were in the news that week because their religious status had again been questioned by Chief Rabbi Nissim. As religious Jews, Zvi Yehudah said, the B'nai Israel should not object to having their ancestry investigated, or to undergoing ritual immersion if that was necessary for acceptance by the rest of the Jewish community. It was the political parties, he insisted, who were making all the trouble.

This discussion with Rabbi Kuk made me feel that perhaps it is time I stopped apologizing for Liberal Judaism. I love and respect Rabbi Kuk, but I know in my heart that a literal application of rabbinic law is wrong in cases like this. The Orthodox have no monopoly on integrity—though they tend to put the rest of us on the defensive—and their attitude toward groups like the B'nai Israel suggests that we Liberal Jews may have a real function in this country.

December.

A MONTH has passed and the H.U.C. building is still not completed. I spend most of my time shouting at carpenters, fighting with the telephone company, engaging in protracted and maddening negotiations with various government agencies. Recently, there was the affair of the Reform prayer books. Having discovered that we would need some two hundred for our upcoming March convocation, I made my way to the offices of the Ministry of Religion to which I had been referred by Customs ("they handle all religious items").

Facing me in the outer office was a man with a *yarmelke* and a beard, who ushered me into an inner office where what seemed an identical man with identical *yarmelke*

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and beard sat sipping a glass of tea. When I explained my errand the pleasant sound of the sipping turned into a gurgle, followed by a profound silence. I said nothing, realizing his predicament. How could a faithful Orthodox Jew and representative of the Ministry of Religion authorize the import of a heretical item like Reform prayer books? Finally, the official recovered sufficiently to inform me that the Minister of Religion was unfortunately in Tel Aviv. But perhaps I could come back the following day.

I did. This time there was no tea, but a good deal of mumbled interrogation about the ultimate purpose of the prayer books. Had the Minister of Religion returned? No, he was still out. But why had I come to the Ministry of Religion in the first place? Book import licenses could be obtained from the Ministry of Commerce. "Religious books also?" I asked.

"Did anyone ask you?" he countered.

I got the point, and returned to my office to make an appointment with the Ministry of Commerce, where the next morning I found an official differing from his colleagues at the Ministry of Religion only by the absence of a *yarmelke* and beard. He sipped his tea and I repeated my story once again.

"You want Reform prayer books—for the Reform synagogue?" Why had I come to him when prayer books were clearly the concern of the Ministry of Religion?

I summarized my interview with the Ministry of Religion. The official shook his head doubtfully. The matter would have to be "discussed." I should return "later in the week."

But when I did return, my official was out because of illness and there was no one in the office who could help me. Two days later I checked in once more. My official had by this time recovered, but he still had no decision for me; in the interim I could fill out an application form (in seven copies). There would, however, be "difficulties": did not these prayer books contain Hebrew script? I admitted that they did. In that case, the official said triumphantly, why couldn't they be printed in Israel? The Israeli government had no interest in importing Hebrew books from abroad.

I was stumped, but years of experience in dealing with New York taxi drivers came to my rescue.

I took out my pencil and little black book.

"What is your name, sir?" I asked in my steadiest voice.

"What do you need my name for?"

"There might," I prodded, "be some people interested in the name of the person who refuses an import license for religious prayer books." My official was now clearly disturbed. The matter "still needed clarification."

Two days later, the arrangements were made.

* * *

I HAVE discovered a red-bearded genius of twenty-six whose name is Adin Steinsaltz. He comes of a secular background, holds a degree in mathematics from the Hebrew University, and teaches both *nigleh,* Jewish law, and *nistar,* Jewish mysticism, with a skill and clarity of exposition that are amazing. I often go with him to the private homes and synagogues where he gives lessons, and afterward we spend hours together unraveling the technical terminology of the Cabbala. Much of the Cabbala, it seems to me, is basically an analysis of the human psyche, and of its relationship with the needs of the body. But everything it has to say—about how the flow of the life juices can be impaired or the creative process hampered—is locked up in forms of thought that are no longer intelligible to us. To release these meanings takes a mind that can span the ages. Steinsaltz has that kind of mind and is therefore looked upon with suspicion by both the secular "enlightened" world (because he is an Orthodox rabbi and has long red sidelocks) and the Orthodox world (because he is a first-rate mathematician and has many secular associations).

On Thursday evenings, Adin instructs a group made up of members of the Jerusalem intelligentsia, whose motivation, they insist, is "scholarly" rather than religious. White-haired Professor Hugo Bergmann of the Hebrew University is there, following the text with a little index card. Zalman Shazar is another regular student, and after class I sometimes give him a ride home in my jeep. We talk gingerly about the college and about Reform Judaism, and Shazar

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(like most of the old guard in Israel) continually reiterates his preference for "the real thing"—the fervor of the Hasidic *shtuebel*—or nothing.

* * *

THIS WEEK in Jerusalem has seen a number of celebrations marking the death 150 years ago of Shneur Zalman, the "old Rebbe," who founded what is called today the Lubavitcher movement—the strongest of the Hasidic sects still extant. The Lubavitcher movement is graced by an assortment of hangers-on who, when they are "in the mood" for religion, will occasionally attend gatherings, sing a few songs, then return easily enough to their usual style of life. Most of those observing the anniversary of the Rebbe's death at the Yeshurun synagogue were of this nostalgic variety. The few real Hasidim with their beards and innocent eyes seemed quite out of place.

The first speaker was the octogenarian, Rabbi Zevin, who read a speech that nobody understood, into a microphone that wasn't working. Then Adin spoke, trying hard to achieve that "flame of spirit" which Hasidism prizes so highly. But his voice is much too soft. Shazar, who closed the meeting, was something else again: a speaker in the grand manner. "What happened," Shazar thundered down at us, pushing his broad-brimmed hat further back on his head and thumping the pulpit as he went along, "what happened that day when Mendel of Vitebsk and three hundred rabbis went to Israel, while Rabbi Shneur Zalman turned back to assume the yoke of organization and financial support for the movement? What did they say to each other on that day of parting?"

This was the first time I had ever seen Shazar in action, and now I can believe the stories they tell about him in younger days. It was dangerous, the veterans say, to sit in the front rows when Shazar spoke. Not only could his table-pounding upset the water glass, but he would occasionally throw the glass itself out into the audience, following it with sundry articles of clothing —his hat, jacket, or belt. In latter years his oratorical powers have been confined largely to funerals, and he is reputed to be able to produce at a moment's notice a full file on every member of the old guard. A few years ago an old-timer died and for some reason Shazar was not invited to deliver the eulogy. People reported that they had never seen him look so glum—indeed, as if he were at a funeral. "It's good to have somebody like that around," one sabra told me. "He adds historic dimension to our lives."

Shazar's well-known attachment to the Lubavitcher movement has made him its unofficial emissary to the Israeli government. At 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, the Lubavitcher headquarters, his connection with Mapai and Ben Gurion is viewed as a providential arrangement allowing the Rebbe to penetrate high Israeli circles.* This concept of "secret lines" fits in with the Lubavitcher movement's image of itself as an underground movement slowly but surely conquering the Jewish world.

For a time, I think, I was their "line" to the Reform movement. I would get messages from the Rebbe "suggesting" that I be present when a question like church-state relations came up for discussion. But since my connection with the Jerusalem School, word has come to me that I have fallen from grace, and I regret it. When I return to the U.S. I must remember to tell the Rebbe that while I was here, I at least blocked the purchase of an organ for the synagogue.

* * *

SOME REAL activity is about to start at the college at last. A few of us are working on plans to set up a kind of exploratory conference, which we have tentatively called "Seeking Paths"—a title sufficiently noncommital for our purposes. (One must be careful here about invoking the term "religion," for to most Israelis it is synonymous with Orthodoxy.) Martin Buber is one of the people we are trying to persuade to participate, and so the other night—a cold rainy night—my wife and I went to visit him in Jerusalem.

The housekeeper led us into the foyer and Buber appeared at the glass doors of his study to invite us in. The light was dim and the room overheated by a round kerosene stove.

"I know you, do I not?" he said looking

* Now that Shazar has become President of Israel, the Lubavitcher are presumably even more certain that the whole thing is providential.

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at me closely. I reminded him that we had met several times in that very room. He beckoned us to a small table while he brought up a chair for himself and placed it so that he could look directly at us. I asked how he was feeling.

"Better. But for illness at my age, one needs doses not only of antibiotics but of faith and humor." He looked closely at me and then at my wife.

"Do you see? I'm not so difficult to understand, am I?" My heart sank. Some time before I had sent Buber a copy of my book in which I recorded a meeting with him and commented that he, the philosopher of the "dialogue," has not really succeeded in communicating with his own people or even his students. I had hoped that the paragraph would escape his notice, but apparently it hadn't.

"All you have to do is listen, really listen," he repeated, "and you will understand."

I feared the evening might be a difficult one and tried to get the conversation back to faith and humor. What did Buber mean by these terms?

"Faith is difficult, and therefore one needs humor. And humor has something to do with a sense of the moment that is passing, floating." He paused, as if thinking. "But also, I believe in eternity."

What was eternity?

"I know that eternity is not infinity, though what it is I cannot understand. Nor can I understand infinite numbers, yet I do believe in them. All I know is that nothing is more certain than death. I do not believe in immortality, but I do believe in eternity. With death I enter into eternity. Do you understand? That is faith."

I mentioned the coming seminar and told Buber we wanted to visit his home on Sabbath eve and sing him a song. He appeared puzzled.

"We want to bring you a gift, to sing you a song—as Hasidim might to their Rebbe."

He was surprised and, it seemed to me, touched. His voice was softer when he spoke again. "Do you have any more questions? No? If not, I have something I want to tell you."

To my surprise, he picked up a copy of my book which had been lying on his desk, the pages obviously marked in preparation for our meeting. Slowly reading the relevant lines with a magnifying glass, he proceeded to refute some of my points. At one time, he conceded, it might have been true that he was isolated from his countrymen and students, but the situation had changed—today most of his visitors are Israelis, and his books, those on philosophy if not on Judaism, have been translated into Hebrew and are almost as popular in Israel as they are abroad. He went on to other "mistakes," and finally, to my relief, closed the book.

"You know," he said with a half-smile, "the Hasidic masters had a *mochiach*—a rebuker, whose job it was regularly to criticize them."

I reminded Buber of the "Seeking Paths" meeting, and he agreed to take part on two conditions—the questions were to be "real" and not "dialectical" ("the kind that men and women ask themselves at two in the morning") and the questioner must try to speak "personally," to say something about himself.

Buber leafed through some papers on his desk and I asked about his writing. He was attempting, he told me, to write about certain crucial incidents of his life, but writing was like talking. He had to visualize the person before him.

He spoke very quietly, as if to himself, and did not look at us. "You know," he said, "I don't like my early books, the ones I wrote before the age of twenty-five or so. I did not become a person till late, till almost forty."

* * *

My CHILDREN have brought home the Hanukah menorahs they made at school. They know all the songs and understand most of the words. Even the four-year-old is beginning to speak, though she still pulls the neighbor's child by sheer force toward the game she wants to play. Only one thing is missing from the holiday preparations—the traditional blessings. It seems to be official policy not to teach religion in the public schools.

On the other side of the "religious" ledger in Israeli public schools is a detail which utterly amazes me. In doing his sums, my little boy makes use of a kind of "T" symbol that I had thought all this time must be the European way of indicating the

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plus sign. Today a neighbor told me that this sign was used in place of a cross. And that the early traffic markings in Tel Aviv also avoided the cross symbol until modern urban demands triumphed.

January, 1963.

THE "Seeking Paths" conference was a success. Some sevently people, most of them from villages and kibbutzim, came together and found themselves able to talk. There were teachers, professors, army officers, and a few high government officials. The absence of publicity and prepared "opening speakers" caught everybody by surprise. It meant that there was to be no organizational exploitation. It was not, that is, to be one of those "dialogues" where both speakers and organizers are more interested in the press release than in listening to each other. What resulted was some three days of personal "confessions."

There was only one sour note—the Sabbath eve with Buber. Maybe the fault was ours—nobody asked the kind of questions that people ask themselves at two in the morning. There were even some foolish questions. But Buber didn't do anything to relieve the embarrassment which everyone felt that evening at the lack of communication.

* * *

THE "Seeking Paths" Conference is having tangible results. A second meeting is scheduled for before Shavuot to discuss "the minimum basis for reviving festivals and holidays in our day." Also, requests to use the building have come from unexpected sources, including the army which wants to hold courses in archaeology. To my surprise, they don't seem worried about what the Chief Rabbinate will say. Even more intriguing is the group of sabra vegetarians who will be meeting here on Saturday nights, ours being the first center, it seems, that agreed to have them. Of course, Judaism has always had a "thing" on food —a conviction that what goes into the stomach has an effect not only on what comes out of the mouth, but on what happens in the soul. I had known that a large number of young people in Israel were interested in vegetarianism, but I hadn't dreamed that there were so many factions among them. One member of the group told me that recent troubles at a vegetarian kibbutz in the Galilee stem at least partly from the fact that many of the members take their citrus fruits after, rather than before the meal, which leads to arousal of the emotions and to "strains" (that can be countered, he assured me, only by the eating of seeds). But I like these young people who gather every Saturday evening to dream of a society where "each man shall sit under his fig tree and none shall make them afraid."

* * *

CRISIS with my vegetarians. *Hechal Shlomo*—the center of the Chief Rabbinate—has invited them to hold their meetings in nearby facilities belonging to the center. They have even been offered financial aid. As a result, the committee that was working with me on plans for a Sabbath weekend at the college did not show up for the last meeting. There is little I can do about it. Since most of these young people come from traditional religious homes, I had suggested that their Sabbath services at the college be along completely traditional lines. I had even asked a student from Rav Kuk's yeshivah to preside, and the latter had promptly reported to the authorities about the "dangerous trap" which was being prepared for these youngsters by the Hebrew Union College. I seem to have stumbled inadvertently on a way to force religious officialdom to take an interest in neglected groups here—simply offer them the hospitality of the Hebrew Union College.

* * *

THE crisis swells. Yesterday two of my vegetarians came to tell me that their leader, David W., is really a Christian missionary in disguise. They urged me to be on my guard against him, and departed, evading my question about our interrupted plans for the Sabbath services.

This morning, W. appeared with his side of the story. He is indeed interested in Christianity (he brought me a tract purporting to be a lost gospel of the New Testament that stresses vegetarian food habits along with fasting and emetic treatments), and sees no contradiction in being an Orthodox Jew and at the same time admiring

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certain of the teachings of Jesus. He had said as much to the youths who had visited me on the preceding day, whereupon the yeshivah student at whose home they were studying had sprung up shouting that it was the duty of every Jew to stone the heretic.

February.

AFTER A two-day trip to Ein Gedi in the Negev, I returned to Jerusalem tonight for a scheduled discussion of Liberal Judaism with some Hebrew University people. I should have stayed at that lush green oasis, for there is little I could tell the "intellectuals" about Reform Judaism; it was they who told me. One university instructor was of the opinion that the growth of synagoguges in America was the result of the McCarthyite era, when Jews felt they had to "belong," or be labeled subversive. Another suggested that Reform Judaism grew out of the fact that modern Jews were too "weak" to undertake the more demanding commitments of Orthodoxy. The consensus was that Reform Judaism, in America especially, was a social and not a religious phenomenon, and that the religion it offered had nothing to do with the historic Jewish religious faith.

There were many in the room who described themselves as "non-religious." When I asked whether their "non-religion" meant a total absence of interest in or connection with God or with prayer, many denied that this was the case, but they all agreed that you either accepted the "full package" or nothing. They could not acknowledge as authentic a religion which asked individuals to distinguish between those elements which had lost their value and those which were still relevant and binding.

It was a not unfamiliar analysis—I have myself preached sermons along similar lines. But as I listened to them, the thought occurred to me that this "all or nothing" approach can be a very easy way of stilling personal religious doubts. It sets up as the only "real" religion a religion that is obviously impossible—hence no effort at all is necessary. As to this easy distinction between "religious" and "social" impulses—who is really equipped to judge whether the hunger of an individual for attention is a religious or a social need?

Like other Liberal religious commentators on the Israeli scene, I have always gone out of my way to deny any intention of "importing" alien modes, and to agree that the forms of religious activity here must be one-hundred-per-cent Israeli. But privately, I'm no longer so sure. I am coming to believe that Israel might benefit from those very aspects of American congregational life that elicit sneers of derision even from American rabbis—the sisterhood, the men's club, and the social work and pastoral functions of the rabbi.

March.

YIDDISH HAS replaced Hebrew as the Holy Tongue—who would have thought it? Friday evenings, Steinsaltz studies with a group of Hasidim in my six-in-one synagogue. They insist that he teach in Yiddish, though he is a native-born Israeli and "breaks his teeth" on the language. What a trick of history—Yiddish, the Diaspora creation, is now the Holy Tongue of the Orthodox world, while Hebrew is its secular language.

* * *

THE PLANE chartered by my congregation in South Orange arrived two days ago, and Sabbath eve we had a brief service at the Hebrew Union College synagogue.

Most interesting was the reaction of the tour's Israelis guides to what must have been their first glimpse of Reform Judaism. The Israelis had never seen a Reform *havdalah* service before and they appeared moved—by more, I think, than the service alone. These American Jews were friends, not just fellow worshippers, and they had succeeded in creating a unit of social life called a congregation.

A message was waiting for me at the end of the service. One of my vegetarians was downstairs, with news that there had been a rebellion in the ranks and most of the group wanted to return to the college. Could they come back and resume their Sabbath eve parties?

I am, of course, delighted but I suspect the real reason for the change of heart is that we allow mixed folk dancing after the meetings. (I am more than ever convinced that there is a vast and fertile field here for congregational work along American lines. The present Israeli youth program,

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for instance, with its emphasis either on political or "scout" programs, excludes many young people. If it were up to me, I'd start projects of all kinds—congregations, study groups, "seeking paths" conferences, vegetarian religious clubs, anything to fill the present spiritual vacuum.)

* * *

EIGHTEEN Indian Jews of the B'nai Israel community have just spent the Sabbath at the college on the invitation of one of our rabbis. How could Zvi Yehudah Kuk have said that their predicament is the result of politics? These people are hurt—"grievously wounded with a wound that will never heal," as one of them put it. I confess I was unprepared for their urbanity and cultivation. Many are college-trained, and they speak perfect English along with two or three Indian dialects and some Hebrew. One distinguished-looking man was a retired member of the Indian civil service, another was a homeopathic doctor who could not get a license to practice in Israel, and was now working, he said shamefacedly, as an "ordinary laborer." There were also a number of young people, some of whom had come to Israel over a dozen years ago with Zionist youth groups. All were dark-complexioned with strikingly fine features.

Before dinner a white-haired man with a gentle voice was persuaded to conduct the brief Sabbath service in the synagogue. They used the Italian-style Sephardic rite, and, except for the young people who had grown up in Israel, everyone knew the prayers by heart. Here and there a lovely touch of India appeared. At certain points in the prayer, for example, they would reach out with their hands "to grasp the blessing and bring it to the lips." Later during the Sabbath meal, they again chanted the prayers with feeling and grace. These people give the impression of a genuine spirituality; their ties to Judaism seem more profound than are those of the North African community, for example. All the more reason for their sense of a "grievous wound."

After the Sabbath meal, there was a discussion. One of the leaders, a young librarian from the Hebrew University, briefly summed up the B'nai Israel affair—the latest in a growing roster of such "episodes." The year before, a young man of their community and his bride, who came of another Eastern group, had asked the local rabbi in Elath to marry them. The latter had refused, on the ground that the religious status of the B'nai Israel was in doubt. This provoked such a violent protest that the Ministry of Religion, generally unswayed by public opinion, found it necessary to work out a face-saving compromise. Members of the B'nai Israel wishing to marry, the Minister decreed, could report to specially appointed registrars who would investigate their genealogy "as far as possible" to insure that their forebears were Jewish, and had been married or divorced according to Orthodox Jewish law. In the opinion of the Minister of Religion, the problem was solved.

But of course it was not. The B'nai Israel complained of the indignity being visited upon them—no other community in the State of Israel is subjected to such an investigation—and cited their proud record of having maintained their Judaism intact for almost two thousand years in the temptingly tolerant atmosphere of India. Now, with the encouragement of the Jewish Agency, they had emigrated to Israel, and what was the result?

The speaker went on to place the responsibility for the situation on Chief Rabbi Nissim. He declared that there was a long-standing feud in India between the Baghdad community and the B'nai Israel, and that Rabbi Nissim, an Iraqui Jew, was not above carrying on a personal vendetta.

Chief Rabbi Nissim is the man who, some years ago, conducted a much-publicized "crusade" among the non-religious kibbutzim, offering a pound to any kibbutz child who could sing *Adon Olam*. Even among the Orthodox, there are few who acknowledge him as a scholar or religious thinker, but the office of the Chief Rabbinate here is so entangled with political and personality questions that these considerations are not the decisive ones. Altogether, I have the impression that even in religious circles, there are many who would not be averse to seeing the office itself abolished.

The B'nai Israel problem has obvious ramifications extending far beyond this particular community. If the criteria now used against the B'nai Israel were to be applied to the descendants of European Jews in Israel, or for that matter to native-born

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Israelis (not to speak of Jews living in Europe and America), a huge proportion of the population would be placed outside the "legitimate" ranks of Judaism. This question has not yet been seriously raised, but it is clear that soon it must be, for Orthodoxy here must polarize toward the right. No Orthodox rabbi is worried about whether a Liberal religious Jew approves of his religious decision. But he does worry about what the more orthodox rabbi will say. Hence, every question of religious law here sooner or later gets posed in its most extreme form.

* * *

ON FRIDAY I drove to the Orthodox B'nai Brak community outside of Tel Aviv where Rabbi Ashlag conducts a kind of continuous seminar in the Zohar that I had long been wanting to visit. Arriving half an hour before the chains were put up closing the streets to traffic on the Sabbath, I raced first to Rabbi Ashlag's house where his wife told me that I was indeed expected. Then I ran to a nearby hotel, rented a tiny room and was told at what hour the electric lights automatically shut off and where the key would be left. Hurrying back to the rabbi's house, I found him seated at a long wooden table with some twenty men, ready for their lesson in the Zohar.

Rabbi Ashlag seemed uneasy in the seat he had inherited from his father, a Cabbalist of profound learning who had published a commentary on the Zohar, and who in his writings had eloquently argued the case for spreading the knowledge of Jewish mysticism among the people. Only the "inner" approach could attract this generation, he had said, and hence the time had come to disregard the traditional warning about passing on the "Teachings of the Secret" to more than a chosen few. His son had taken over the elder rabbi's work, organizing well-advertised lessons in the Zohar in Tel Aviv and Haifa, as well as in B'nai Brak, where he was also trying to build a synagogue and yeshivah. But the enterprise wasn't going well. Several of those seated around the table were on the border of senility, and the others seemed to have come mainly out of curiosity.

Rabbi Ashlag, a brown-bearded man with nervous dark eyes, did his best to act the part of the Rebbe, flanked by his two sons, one a husky six-footer in the traditional black silk caftan, and a younger boy wearing Lord Fauntleroy-like black stockings and knickers. They too tried to play the role of the royal princes in traditional Hasidic style, but there was missing that charismatic connection between the Rebbe and his Hasidim without which the play is meaningless.

About ten in the evening we returned to the rabbi's home where a magnificent Sabbath meal was served, and the play around the table was continued in high form. Instead of the usual two, there were six *chalos* in front of the rabbi, according to the mystic formulas of the holy Ari. The elder son lifted the brimming wine cup and placed it in his father's hand for the Sanctification. The women sat quietly at one corner of the table, watching the men carrying on their rituals. The younger son recited his blessings, then offered a limp handshake to the rest of us, and Rabbi Ashlag discoursed on the importance of mystic studies.

After sunset the next day, I returned to make my donation to the synagogue, and Rabbi Ashlag promised to get in touch with me in America where he would shortly be visiting to raise money for the yeshivah on which he had set his heart. I did not tell him that I was a Reform rabbi.

* * *

PURIM. There has been a theological crisis in the Reform synagogue over the reading of the Megillah. Several of the lay readers felt that the Megillah represents lower-level Judaism—rejoicing in the destruction of enemies, etc. Rabbi Zaoui and I were quite content to rejoice: Jack Cohen, good Reconstructionist that he is, had theological reservations but preferred sticking to tradition, and the decision was to compromise. Sections of the Megillah will be read, but without the traditional blessings.

I think it was in reaction to this theological discussion that I sought out Reb Arele's Hasidic synagogue in Meah Shearim on Purim night. Reb Arele and his Hasidim make *Hechal Shlomo,* seat of the Chief Rabbinate, seem a vanguard of Reform. When I arrived at about nine in the evening there were only some two dozen Hasidim left in the huge, newly built, and still un-

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furnished synagogue. They pressed in on both sides of the narrow table, avidly watching their Rebbe. Plates of food were brought, passed, or rather grasped, by eager hands and placed before Reb Arele who would then sample a spoonful or two and chew slowly, while his Hasidim hung breathlessly on every swallow as if the salvation of their souls depended on it. When the Rebbe pushed a half-full plate aside, it was seized and the particles of food devoured within seconds by the Hasidim. Occasionally, he would call out somebody's name and hand him a spoonful of food—a very special honor.

Several young boys sitting on the window sill above were still wearing Purim masks over their faces and false beards, adding a Voodoo touch to the scene. And through it all, a Hasid stood on a table nearby scraping away at a violin, his adoring eyes fixed steadily on his Rebbe.

Leaving the synagogue, I was nearly run down by a bicycle on whose handlebars one long-bearded Jew sat singing and whistling madly, while another long beard pedaled him recklessly through the narrow street crowded with Purim strollers. They had both fulfilled the rabbinic injunction commanding every Jew on Purim to drink until he is unable to distinguish between "Blessed be Mordecai and cursed be Haman"—a law to which the theologians of the Liberal synagogue in Jerusalem should pay more attention.

* * *

THE COLLEGE'S first convocation is over, and they tell me that it went well.

The American ambassador opened the ceremonies with the announcement of a grant of money from the U.S. government for the Jerusalem School; Ben Gurion followed him, his white-haloed head barely reaching above the speakers' table, his voice shrill and strong as ever, and his words directed at least partly to the pillars of Reform Judaism who had come to Jerusalem for the first board meeting of the college ever to be held outside the U.S.: "I am first a Jew and only second an Israeli." Then Nelson Glueck, with some good sentences—"From Sinai to Cincinnati to Jerusalem is a long way . . ." The honorary degrees were awarded, the cameras clicked, the choir sang its final number, and the procession waited while Ben Gurion stopped to shake hands with Abba Hillel Silver in the audience. Not a sign of an Orthodox demonstration; I think we were all a little disappointed.

The Sabbath services were pleasant, and my sermon was too long, though its theme was simple. In Israel there is time and energy only for the essentials—preparedness, security, survival. If Reform Judaism can prove itself "essential" in Israel—as real in a man's life as his worries about military security, or money, or food, or clothing—then and only then will it find a place. In short, it is not the Israelis who are being tested here, but Reform Judaism itself.

A few more days more and I'll be back home. In many ways it will be easier. For one thing, I won't have the strain of shuttling back and forth between two worlds—the Hebrew Union College and Reb Arele's Hasidism. Yet I have come to wonder whether a certain amount of spiritual schizophrenia may not be valuable. The Cabbala has an image of God's grace descending and even being assisted by the "pull of opposites"—the right and the left, the masculine and the feminine, the quality of harshness and the quality of mercy. But the Cabbala, too, insists that there are times when what is apart must come together for at least a passing moment of unity. Otherwise, the apparatus cannot function, and the life force is meaninglessly scattered and dissipated. Of course, I'm not sure that the unity of suburban Jewish life is what the Cabbala had in mind.

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RONALD STEEL

FORTRESS AMERICA

CHALLENGED BY European demands for nuclear equality, the United States has replied indignantly that a European deterrent would be economically wasteful and strategically dangerous. While Congress grumbles about European "ingratitude," the administration has been busily assembling ingenious gimmicks such as "multilateralism" to appease the Europeans without giving up the American nuclear monopoly. But even as it pledges eternal allegiance to NATO, the U.S. has been responding to European aggressiveness with a radical change in military strategy—one leading toward a gradual disengagement of American nuclear forces from Europe and an exclusive reliance on an American-based defense. This development is bound to have momentous consequences, not only in speeding up the disintegration of the Atlantic alliance, but in giving a very different structure to the cold war.

The blueprint for the new American strategy lies in the counter-force theory for the conduct of nuclear war, resurrected by Secretary McNamara in his famous speech at Ann Arbor in June 1962. Discarding simple deterrence as too negative and defeatist, this theory posited that nuclear wars can be prevented and perhaps even "won" if the U.S. possesses a vast nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union. This superiority would allow it to absorb a Russian attack and still have enough reserve power to destroy both Soviet military targets and cities. The huge arsenal would, presumably, also permit the U.S. to launch a crippling first strike that could destroy all Soviet bomber and missile bases and thereby prevent the Russians from retaliating. Under these conditions, realizing that they could not "win," the Russians would refrain from aggression.

However, since war has been known to occur even when irrational, counter-force theory also had a corollary: that nuclear war could be made tolerable if damage were confined largely to military bases rather than to cities. The Russians were therefore to be told that the U.S. would spare their cities if they agreed to spare American ones. Their incentive for agreeing to a "no-cities" doctrine was the knowledge that the United States had sufficient nuclear power to attack both Soviet military sites and cities, but would refrain from hitting the cities so long as the Russians did the same. Given the Russians' nuclear inferiority, which would make it impossible for them to wipe out all the scattered American bases and submarines, the U.S. would emerge from a "controlled counter-force" war with most of its own cities more or less intact. Since it could hold Russian cities in hostage by possessing nuclear weapons after the Rus-

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sians had expended theirs, the U.S. would be able to "win" the war.

The counter-force doctrine was composed of three elements. First—in order to make sure that the Europeans would never start bombing Russian cities in retaliation to attacks against their own—national nuclear forces in Europe were to be discouraged and all nuclear weapons kept under American control. Second, tactical nuclear weapons were to be gradually withdrawn from Europe lest their use in combat "escalate" into full-scale war. And finally, the Europeans were to increase their conventional forces, raising NATO's land army from twenty-four to thirty divisions so that it might be possible to fight a non-nuclear war on the continent.

Apart from the dubious optimism of its assumption that cities would be spared in a nuclear war, the counter-force strategy offered something both more feasible and more important: a "flexible response" which would permit the U.S. to reply to Soviet actions at any level and in any way it considered appropriate. Nuclear superiority was to be the means by which America would gain a wide range of options, running from guerrilla warfare to nuclear devastation. As such, the new strategy was an attempt to shed the outdated baggage of "'massive retaliation" and regain the power of choice—the choice not only as to how America would fight a war in Europe, but whether it would fight one at all.

IN ALL three of its elements—the discouragement of national nuclear forces, the downgrading of tactical nuclear weapons, and the demand for a larger European conventional army—the Pentagon's new strategy has served to intensify rather than assuage European fears of abandonment by the United States. Europeans have seen America's determination to prevent the creation of nuclear forces on the continent as a double-edged sword: one which ensures continued American military (and hence political) control of the alliance, while at the same time permitting the U.S. to decide to what degree —and indeed whether—it would become involved in a nuclear war on Europe's behalf. By giving a new flexibility to American strategy, the Pentagon's "options" have poured fuel on European fears that the U.S., in order to protect its own chances for survival, is preparing to back out of its nuclear guarantee to Europe.

The Pentagon's discouragement of national nuclear forces in Europe has not been the only factor in raising doubts about the permanence of American involvement on the continent. Equally significant has been the demand for a larger conventional army in Europe, one which would presumably eliminate reliance on the tactical nuclear weapons with which NATO forces have been equipped. To be sure, the avoidance of a nuclear exchange is essential to the preservation of European society. But total dependence upon a conventional army is not necessarily in the interests of the Europeans. The Europeans never imagined when they joined NATO that they would be expected to defend the continent on the ground. Rather, it was America's nuclear arsenal which was meant to deter Russia's military ambitions and prevent war, whether nuclear or conventional, in Europe. The troop contingents that the Europeans pledged to NATO were simply a token gesture to show that the U.S. was not being asked to carry the total burden of European defense by itself.

When the United States introduced tactical nuclear weapons into the front-line in Germany, it did so partly to compensate for the numerically superior Soviet forces ranged on the other side of the Iron Curtain and partly for psychological reasons: to make the Russians believe that invasion would trigger off a nuclear exchange which would inevitably spread to Russia itself. The Europeans accepted these atomic weapons on their soil not be-

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cause they thought they would ever be used—NATO's periodic "exercises" had demonstrated that there would not be much of Europe left after a tactical atomic war—but specifically because they were designed *not* to be used. That is, the Europeans regarded tactical atomic weapons as an extension of the strategic deterrent force itself. However, the Pentagon's new proposal that the defense of Europe be conducted entirely by conventional forces, removes the whole deterrent effect of the tactical weapons. It implies that if the Russians should move their army into Hamburg, for example, and if the Europeans were unable to repel them, the United States would accept this loss rather than use nuclear weapons which could involve its own cities in a full-scale nuclear war.

Although it is important that Europe be defended without an automatic recourse to atomic weapons, the Europeans can only look with alarm on a defense strategy which can be totally nullified by the introduction of nuclear weapons by the Russians. The effectiveness of a conventional defense, after all, depends upon the knowledge that behind it lies a nuclear arsenal that can be called upon if necessary. The Europeans can, and indeed should, renounce the first use of nuclear weapons, but this would be meaningful only if the Russians were inhibited from using theirs by a credible nuclear force in the West. If the Europeans are not to have either tactical or strategic atomic weapons of their own, and if they can no longer be certain that the American deterrent will be used in their defense, where does their protection lie? Promises of loyalty are not enough to compensate for changes of policy which establish "options" of loyalty. America's demand for an enlarged European conventional army thus appears as but the prelude for the eventual withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Europe and further, the withdrawal of the unconditional American nuclear guarantee.

THE NEW American strategy is not capricious: it is based upon the unavoidable implications of evolving military technology. The conflict between the pretensions of counter-force and the demand for a large conventional army in Europe can be reconciled, but only by a paradox: that although America's nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union is unchallenged, it is of declining importance. The reason is that the United States can no longer hope to eradicate Soviet nuclear power through the application of superior force. The change which has brought this about is the development of invulnerable long-range missile forces by both the United States and the Soviet Union. Having "hardened" their missiles by stationing them underground and underwater, the two nuclear giants now have the power to obliterate one another regardless of who strikes first.

Secretary McNamara outlined the implications of the new atomic parity in January 1963 when he told the House Armed Services Committee that as the Russians make their own missile force invulnerable,

> It would become increasingly difficult, regardless of the form of the attack, to destroy a sufficiently large proportion of the Soviets' strategic nuclear forces to preclude major damage to the United States, regardless of how large or what kind of strategic forces we build. Even if we were able to double or triple our forces we would not be able to destroy quickly all or almost all of the hardened ICBM sites. And even if we could do that, we know no way to destroy the enemy's missile-launching submarines at the same time.

This statement had two clear corollaries. First, counter-force was no longer feasible since it would be incapable of doing its major job—destroying Soviet missiles; and second, the United States could not order its nuclear forces to the defense of Europe without assuming that America would be destroyed in the nuclear counter-attack. The development of invulnerable missile forces by the United

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States and the Soviet Union meant that any nuclear conflict between them would lead to the destruction of both. Thus, despite the fact that the United States is continuing to build a counter-force missile arsenal which by 1965 will number some 1700 ICBMs, it can neither disarm the Soviet Union nor prevent a Russian retaliation that would end, according to a Defense Department study, with the death of some 100 million Americans and the obliteration of the United States. The resultant nuclear stalemate has given a kind of stability to the jittery nuclear confrontation between America and Russia. But at the same time it has eroded the assumption that the U.S. would engage in a nuclear war for the sake of Europe.

In consequence, American defense strategy has now been redesigned to keep the decision between peace and war for the U.S. strictly in American hands. Whatever happens in Europe, in other words, the United States will never let itself be drawn into a nuclear war against its own will. To implement this strategy the U.S. has been moving as fast as political circumstances permit toward a nuclear disengagement from all other parts of the world, particularly Europe. The commitment to counter-force remains, but its object has changed. It is no longer the means for disarming the Soviet Union, but rather the instrument for justifying the American nuclear monopoly on which the doctrine of "controlled counter-force" warfare rests.

THE FIRST major step in the direction of American nuclear disengagement was taken at the Nassau conference of December 1962, when the Kennedy administration tried to end Britain's nuclear independence and simultaneously push her into the Common Market by abandoning the Skybolt missile. The device failed, but it will be at least 1970—if ever—before Britain develops the nuclear submarines on which the substitute offer of Polaris missiles depends. Simultaneously, the U.S. sought to head off national nuclear forces in Europe by proposing a so-called "multilateral" nuclear force to which the allies would contribute, but which would be under American control. By depriving the Europeans of the power to trigger a nuclear war, the U.S. would be able to keep the final power of decision in its own hands.

The second step in the American design was a change in its own military strategy: the abandonment of manned bombers in favor of an inter-continental missile force based in the U.S. and on roving atomic submarines. Without bombers there is no need for foreign air bases, and therefore no danger of foreign political or military interference in the American strategic nuclear force. Air bases from Morocco to Pakistan are being closed, and American missiles are being dismantled in Britain, Italy, and Turkey. Indeed, the entire foreign-base system is being scrapped as technologically obsolete and strategically unreliable. This removes the old specter of one of the allies gaining control of U.S. missiles and shooting them off in response to a Russian move against its territory. The abandonment of the foreign bases gives the United States a freedom of maneuver it has not enjoyed since the cold war began. It also removes the one assurance of the nations harboring these bases that the U.S. would become involved in a war on their behalf.

What is happening, then (although American officials are understandably reluctant to admit it), is that the United States is moving toward a "Fortress America" defense resting on inter-continental U.S.-based missiles, and on mobile infantry brigades which can be sent to various trouble spots around the world. This is simply the logistical expression of what has become a political imperative: the withdrawal of American nuclear weapons to the United States itself. Just one more step remains to be taken to restore the power of decision entirely to American hands; the retirement of Ameri-

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can soldiers from Europe. Only if this is done will the strategy of nuclear disengagement—the discouragement of national nuclear forces in Europe, the closing of overseas bases, the downgrading of tactical nuclear weapons, and the demand for a large European conventional army—make any sense. The increase in European land forces is logically designed not to supplement the American troops in Germany, but ultimately to replace them.

The U.S. can afford to leave this final option open so long as it retains absolute control of the West's nuclear forces. Indeed, the fact that all the other prerequisites of disengagement are being taken serves as a bludgeon to ward off European nuclear ambitions. Thus President Kennedy's statement in Bonn last June that "So long as our presence is desired and required, our forces and commitments will remain" is no contradiction of the new strategy, but rather a means of assuaging German anxieties, while at the same time leaving open the door for an American withdrawal on the day that the Europeans gain their own nuclear weapons, the event which would make our presence neither desired nor required.

It is an irony of the cold war that evolving military technology, by eliminating the need for foreign bases, has provided the justification for American neo-isolationism on both the political and strategic levels. America's postwar policies of internationalism rested upon a solid military foundation, for until recently it was not possible to preserve America's global interests within a purely American strategic system. The two, however, can now be fused, and what we are witnessing in the Pentagon's new strategy is a reconciliation of two seemingly contrary objectives: a purely American defense of America's world-wide interests. The movement toward "Fortress America" already has a broad foundation of support in Congress—not only among old-style isolationists who never did have any use for "foreigners," but among such liberals as Wayne Morse and Frank Church who have virtually called for an end to NATO in a series of remarkable speeches in the Senate this year. Even such an internationalist and supporter of NATO as Senator Fulbright said on television in June that Common Market tariff restrictions may "make it impossible for us to maintain an army in Europe at the cost of $1 billion."

In view of its new strategy, it is a bit difficult to comprehend Washington's indignation over European doubts regarding the continued validity of the American nuclear guarantee. The whole justification for the new strategy, after all, is that NATO's old defense formulas are no longer relevant. If this were not true, why should the communiqué issued at Nassau have proclaimed that the old "sword and shield" doctrine for the defense of Europe was being reversed—that from now on conventional armies are to be the sword of NATO, and America's strategic nuclear force the shield? Was this not an explicit acknowledgment of the fact that America's nuclear weapons would no longer be used to repel a Russian land attack, but rather would be kept in reserve for nothing less than an attack upon the United States itself?

It is thus the new American strategy, not creeping paranoia in Europe, which has made the allies question America's commitment to their defense. It is the policy of nuclear disengagement, not simply French stubbornness, which has led to the present disarray in the Atlantic alliance. The doctrine of "flexible response," however desirable for the defense of the United States itself, is not very compelling to Europeans. Instead of protection, it appears to posit a conflict in which the Russians would wipe out much of Western Europe while the Americans would be doing the same to Eastern Europe. The two nuclear giants, having proved their national virility, could then call a truce over a radioactive Europe,

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after engaging in a war that was "limited" for them, but absolute for the Europeans. De Gaulle drew a bleak picture of this situation in one of his renowned rhetorical questions:

> Who can say that if in the future the political background having changed completely—that is something that has already happened on earth—the two powers having the nuclear monopoly will not agree to divide the world? Who can say that if the occasion arises the two, while each deciding not to launch its missiles at the main enemy so that it should itself be spared, will not crush the others? It is possible to imagine that on some awful day western Europe would be wiped out from Moscow and central Europe from Washington. And who can say that the two rivals, after I know not what political and social upheaval, will not unite?

De Gaulle's ruminations of 1959 were prescient of the implications of the American strategy that has finally emerged in 1963.

As far as the United States is concerned, there is no reason to apologize for the new strategy or to pretend that it does not really mean what it so obviously implies. This strategy is a logical expression of the revolutionary effect of nuclear weapons on political alliances. Just as these weapons have separated the defense of Europe from that of America, so they have established a curious community of interest between America and the Soviet Union. While neither of the two giants is particularly happy with the present nuclear stalemate, both have begun to recognize that by protecting their deterrents they may be able to reduce the danger of war between them. Their present rivalry is not a stable one—it keeps breaking down, despite their desire to contain it, in unmanageable places like Cuba and Laos—but they feel that the alternative is far worse: a world in which their radioactive ruins would be fought over by an expansionist China and an ambitious Europe.

They have, therefore, developed a vested interest in the present balance of their rivalry, for it allows each of them to keep their allies in check and to dominate their own half of the world. Russia's great rival today is not the United States, with whom she shares an increasingly boring balance of terror, but a militant China which threatens to steal her revolutionary thunder in the churning *tiers monde* of ex-colonial and underdeveloped states. Similarly, the United States, plagued by a sluggish economy and a chronic balance of payments deficit, has less to fear from a Russia preoccupied with her own internal problems than from an economically aggressive European community which is determined to take over as many American markets as it can. As China is to Russia, so Western Europe has become to America: a reluctant ally, and increasingly a rival which must somehow be contained.

There is nothing wrong with the new American defense strategy—other than that it runs completely counter to the original conception of the Atlantic alliance. If the United States has finally decided that it will only become involved in a nuclear war at its own choice, then the strategy Washington is pursuing is correct, and needs neither apologies nor equivocations. If, on the other hand, the American people are still willing to let their European allies involve them in a nuclear war so that the present framework of NATO can be preserved, then the Pentagon's entire strategy of "flexible response" and "controlled counter-force" warfare must be scrapped for the sake of making the American nuclear guarantee credible once again to the NATO allies. If an integrated military alliance with Europe is what the United States wants, then it must relinquish the power to wage or refrain from war—which in this age may amount to survival or extinction.

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ALLEN WHEELIS

TO BE A GOD

AMONG THE first to arrive, we climb to a bench beneath a tree. Beside us over a low stone wall the vineyard falls away across the hillside. Gnarled vines uddered with grape, evenly spaced and pruned, manacled each to its low frame, descend in long green lines. Among them move a horse and plowman, slowly, with unsure footing, the red earth turning between the vines, plowshare flashing in the sun. In the grass along the wall, a column of ants; on stage two, young men arranging chairs for the string orchestra. The sun is past the zenith, throws a pattern of leaves on my wife's bent head. To the west a tidal wave of fog spills over the coastal hills, is burned by sun to incandescence. To the east, down-sloping fields, a line of trees and a ravine, another vineyard, a meadow and more trees, and the level valley floor, cities and towns, the freeway like an ant trail, the silver bay, the far mountains, summer . . . the blue sky over all.

My summer too, far enough along to see the end: work a little harder, make more money, children off to college, freedom then and the world tour, back and more work, weddings and thrown bouquets, and then the coronary. Is this the way to live? Who knows the question knows not how; who knows not the question cannot tell.

The amphitheater is being filled: a chatter of voices, a false laugh, chic women in spike heels and beehive coiffures crowding up the grassy path. How do others live? The musicians settle themselves on the stage with a clatter of chairs, begin the tuning of instruments. Around us gray-haired men with white handkerchiefs bend gravely and dust benches; young women in sundresses, with firm brown arms, glance at each other, compare clothes, compare . . . compare. There's Arthur Lapham with a flaming redhead, looking over her to all who enter, nodding, waving, ready always for the big chance. And Dr. Naserhof, psychoanalyst with the sad yellow face, shoulders stooped as if by an invisible weight, a tall spare frame that lay stretched on my couch (for I, too, am an analyst), feet dangling, four times a week for—how many?—years; for a while analysis itself becoming for him the meaning of life, a kind of formal minuet in which the learning of new psychic steps replaced lost illusions; with insight to spare but no change, coming in time to feel betrayed, but still on the couch for years . . . years, creating for my ears elegies of transience and disillusion, laments on the wandering restlessness of man—saying, "I came to this hospital as a resident, and still remember how it was. And how I was. Patients would arrive sick and leave well. Something would happen—insight—that made a difference. So I thought. It's the same now; but I'm different, and what they achieve is respite, not change. For any significant change proves illusory, and any real change proves insignificant. Whatever was wrong with them stays wrong, recurs, the same or slightly different, and they muddle along for a while with ups and downs, and then come back. And the second time is like the first—some new insights, some new 'realizations,' some new 'turning points'—like the wind turns"; now, himself behind the couch, making fifty thousand a

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year, his heart still feeling the sterility of life, great gifts going to waste, wanting to give himself to something—research perhaps, or teaching, maybe the Peace Corps—but can't be sure, putting it off, never deciding, moving meanwhile from wife to wife, coming back to see me at his third divorce (that young woman on his arm with the tight dress and plunging neckline, is she number four?), hesitating at the door, vaguely touching the books with his long fingers, saying, "I read a little Tillich . . . very good . . . very stimulating . . . try to find out something, some meaning . . . the style is difficult. . . ." Prisoner of the past . . . could he choose a different life? Could I?

Near the stage I see my friend Simon; the place is full of psychoanalysts. He raises a hand in greeting, starts up the grassy path —a barrel of a man with a rolling walk, sun gleaming on bald head, a bristling mustache, swarthy skin with genial wrinkles, black eyes darting furiously, mouth working over a black cigar, rolling it, chewing it, issuing billows of smoke as if for a festival. I know from his manner he has something to tell me. "C'mere," he says, plucking my arm, and leads me some distance away from possible interruption; "got a gem for you." He backs me against a tree, puffs harder in anticipation of brief abstinence, explodes in smoke shrouding us both. "Listen to this!" He puts the cigar on a branch near my head, fixes me with restless, tormented eyes, and pokes me lightly on the chest to prevent my attention from wandering. "This happened yesterday in a supervision hour . . . candidate reporting on the analysis of a thirty-seven year old man. The patient remembered something from early childhood: he had waked at night with an earache and called for his mother. She came in her nightgown, took his temperature, and said he had to have medicine. He cried; she insisted. When she went to get the medicine he got out of bed, ran silently down the hall to his parents' bedroom, and slipped in beside his sleeping father. When the medicine was prepared his mother couldn't find him. . . . O.K.? Understand? That's the memory. At that point I interrupted the candidate: 'Stop right there,' I said; 'I will predict for you the content of the next hour!' "

Simon pauses, and I register an obliging astonishment.

"So," he says, poking me a little harder with the stubby forefinger, "what did I tell him?" Having long since given up these psychoanalytic puzzles, along with three-move chess problems, I shrug in amiable defeat. "It's easy," Simon says. " 'The patient will stand up his wife and try to seduce his analyst.' The candidate's mouth fell open when I said that—because that's exactly what had happened. In the very next hour the patient reported having forgotten to meet his wife, left her standing on Union Square; she was furious. And in that same hour, at the end, when he got up from the couch—whatdya think?—he gave the candidate a stock tip: 'Buy Sundown Oil,' he said. 'It's a sleeper; there's going to be a sellout. It'll double at least.' Get it?" Simon shouts, the finger jabbing gleefully. "Get it? *'Sleeper'*! *'Sellout'*! Isn't that beautiful! Isn't that a gem!" A few more exclamations, and the story is over. I rejoin my wife, furtively rubbing my chest. Simon wanders off, billowing smoke again, hails a friend, launches into another story.

And the others here around me . . . how do they live? On a Sunday afternoon like this they drive out of the city into hills and meadows, in sunlight, to a concert; and tomorrow will wake and dress and eat, go to work; will sell houses, buy stock, examine patients, teach classes, settle estates, look after children; then home to the two cocktails and dinner, then the movie or committee meeting or television or party, and more to drink and so to bed and the making of love—with love or without—and to sleep, the earth turning, the sun rising, and so all again. And all this is perhaps nothing of choice, no creation, but the life process as given—to this species in this time and place —a role we play with a make-believe of independence, but then we die for real.

And I? The same: ten patients a day now, make more money, pay more taxes, buy more stocks and better clothes, drink more wine, worry about practice, reputation, Russians, cholesterol . . . the same old things. Is this the way to live? Is there a choice?

The cacophony of tuning dwindles, ends; the conductor enters to applause; the hush, the raised baton, the poised bows; then a lyric soaring, light as a butterfly, deft as a

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hummingbird, and oh I wish I had lived in the time of that music. That's the harmony of the spheres, Boccherini plucked it out of the air. That's the Heavenly City being erected on Europe's green and pleasant land. That's the graceful motion of infinitely perfectible man, the serene processional on the path of progress. That's the 18th century. Never before or since has man achieved such an orderly image of life. Maybe I would have been stifled by its smugness, but I envy its certainties. When one is so sure one can afford to be good. We are in the slough of doubt; it has a bitter taste and a discordant sound.

The audience is still now, faces fixed on the stage like a bed of strange flowers combed by the wind. The bows move in unison, while above us the leaves of poplar turn simultaneously at the touch of inaudible breeze; we are caught and held by a pattern of notes from the 18th century, and are caught up beyond this music in something not of our choosing, a solemn procession, living out assigned roles, disappearing like leaves. Choice? Where is choice? We look like gods but are like that horse, in invisible harness, pulling an invisible plow, obediently, day after day, down the same furrow to the same end.

It is easy to admit to this malaise provided one is willing to label it sickness—middle-age depression, perhaps, or involutional state. Life is not impugned. One may go then to an analyst for help, may even speak of it to friends. But those who regard it as the stuff of which our days are made cannot speak. When truth indicates despair we seek illusion, and who dare attack such a choice?—who, indeed, other than those who covet the freedom to make it. We cannot, having no other life to offer, betray the life that betrays us. I too have been silent, speak now only because—sitting here in this pleasant company on this sunny afternoon, feeling days run through me and on like an unknowable river, seeing my image in that horse and plowman—I am again in search of a freedom beyond constraint.

THAT WAS a shrewd guess of Simon's—but that's all. Most analysts would admit that the evidence did not warrant the prediction, that many unreckoned and unmeasured variables may have brought about (or might have prevented) the outcome. Analysts are modest this way; "We need more evidence," they say, thereby cloaking a Promethean arrogance. For the assumption implicit in Simon's story—one which most analysts would share—is this: that there are general laws of mental functioning (repetition compulsion, transference and displacement, etc.) which, together with a sufficiently exact and extensive knowledge of initial and intervening conditions (traumatic event, reactivation in free association, etc.) make possible, in principle at least, the prediction of future mental events.

I used to be fluent at this game, facile in reducing a man to psychodynamics; now am silent, can't bring myself to mouth the clichés. Yet it was just this arrogance of psychoanalysis that drew me to it in the first place. For, acting with the conviction of freedom and choice, I would see, later, that I had been driven, and so came in time to the sense of being lived by unknown forces. Psychoanalysis promises insight into this darkness, and, through insight, control. Determinism thus ministers to the quest for certainty; it asserts regularity, denies any fundamental chance or chaos. For the lost security of God in the heavens it substitutes an immutable orderliness, not only in heaven but also on earth, in the mind of man and in the heart of the atom—to which Einstein gave voice in his vehement disavowal of chance: *"Der Herr Gott würfelt nicht!"* ("The Lord God does not throw dice!").

Yet the history of determinism is a history of paradox—and this, itself, is a paradox, since the whole point of determinism is the deletion of inconsistency. Religious determinism runs a veritable gauntlet of paradox: a wholly good God creating a world marked by evil; man being free to choose, yet God having foreknowledge of man's acts; God being omnipotent, yet man being responsible. Nor is scientific determinism much better off. All is well when we deal with isolated systems, such as our group of planets, which we can observe and measure without disturbing. This is the determinism of Laplace: the demon stands outside the system on which it makes pronouncements. But so soon as we say, "All is determined," and really mean *all*, we're in trouble; for we're talking about a system which includes

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ourselves and our talking—like the map of an area which includes a map of that area —and every word we utter is a change in that which the word is trying to pin down.

No one could have been more explicit or passionate than Freud in insisting that every last wisp and shred of psychic occurrence is rigidly determined, that no event of inner life could be other than it is, that nothing of soul escapes the deterministic net, that the fleeting wordless images are in principle reducible to formula and, though infinitely more complex, are no less lawful than the movement of planets, that free will is but a subjective state to be causally explained like any other. Yet it was Freud who found it necessary to say that the object of analysis is "to give the patient's ego *freedom* [his italics] to choose one way or the other." We, as psychoanalysts, expose to a patient why he *has* to be the way he is, then expect him to use this insight to become different from the way we have proved to him he can't help being. We try to climb out of this pit by asserting that causes effecting character change operate not only in childhood but throughout life, that the interpretations of an analyst are one class of such causes, and that these may relieve a neurosis in the same deterministic way that certain other causes produced the neurosis in the first place. The hope of radical change, we say, calls, not for the suspension of exceptionless determinism, but just the opposite—for a more vigorous application of the deterministic principle. Then we're really in trouble; for we're appealing for support for a law which, we say, cannot conceivably be disobeyed and hence needs no support. Here, without awareness, we invoke our double standard: expressly declaring our patients to be determined, we covertly regard ourselves as being free. Otherwise we should have to admit that our interpretations are just as incapable of being anything other than what they have been, are, and will be, as the phenomena to which they are addressed.

There is no escape from this impasse, and it has come to explicit formulation by Gödel and Bridgman: a system dealing with itself encounters paradox; its postulates cannot be verified within the system. A deterministic psychoanalyst is like the Cretan passionately declaring all Cretans to be liars; like the barber, instructed to shave all men who do not shave themselves, wondering what to do about his own beard. As psychoanalysts our voices are getting hoarse, our beards are growing longer, and we are getting no wiser.

So what to do? What *is* a rational man to do—having lost faith in reason? I don't know. The question trips itself. I don't suppose it matters. I keep on working—not with hope, not with justification, but as a matter of taste. What else is there? Passivity, suicide, fleshpots . . . all equally absurd. I like the dignity of work. It has at least the merit of defiance, of shaking a fist at the heavens. But that's just whimsy. Make a value out of that, and it too will disappear.

I DO NOT suppose this view to be general, but I know it to be common. It's easy to hide; and because of guilt (for it *is* a rejection of life and one *does* feel guilty) one wants to hide it. Young lovers close their eyes, old lovers dissemble. Does my wife know? I look at her face and remember the storm of our coming together. I was the rock and she the wave breaking over me—tossed, scattered, falling, but reforming, coming always toward me, exploding, dismembered, thrown in a thousand directions, yet coming always back, rising with undiminished force and wholeness, enveloping me, until foam proved harder than granite, and sharpness was smoothed by green caress. This turning away from life betrays that love. I try to keep it from her, and she—since she cannot help—tries not to know.

What I speak of here is experienced by others in different ways: a sense of futility, an intimation of unimportance attaching to creative effort, a vague feeling that the author of any serious endeavor is fooling himself. Most common now is the bomb which lights the world with transience, shows us solid marble as papier-mâché.

My friend Jeff, sitting nearby, sees it as death. He too is an analyst, once a creative one, wrote a few brilliant papers . . . then silence. "I began to feel the black hand coming closer," he told me once, "the utter unacceptability, the inner shriek. People don't think about death. They go about their business, months pass, it rarely comes to mind. This is mental health. The self-righteous even call it courage. Psychiatrists affirm it; the denial insinuates itself even

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into the definition of normality. To be concerned with death, we say, is morbid. It's not true. The fear and the revulsion are universal, but ignored. We contrive to assume that death is something that happens to other people or at a distant time. The most important death, we know nothing about, don't want to know. The whole of civilization connives with this denial. All of the temples and bridges and novels and sonnets, all of the pyramids and paintings and symphonies and machines, all of the uses of reason, the clear concept, the unifying theory. These things are made with our life-blood, with the days of our years. And who has it to spare? Why, men who will never die. So—obviously—those who do these things are not about to die. Well . . . I *am*. So I no longer have the time."

And this sunny company, prosperous all, well-dressed, educated, cultured—blessed and fortunate, one might think, beyond all others—the cancer grows here too. I'm a clinician of despair, I know the little signs: the wordless shadow in the eye, the furtive pain around the mouth; and the thousand ways of denying it, rationalizing it, running away from it: the distraction with *things,* the attempt to bribe one's bitterness with luxuries (cars, houses, fur coats, country places); the flight into hobbies (sailing, chess, tennis, wine, poker); the weekends in Las Vegas and Acapulco; and the final common pathway of sex. We—all of us—go to cocktail parties, smile and talk and talk, we take care of children, and work, and take pride in what we do, and believe the trouble isn't there. But we fool ourselves. It's there, and we know it at night when the wind blows. And it's there, too, after analysis; for when you have been completely analyzed—whatever that may mean—when, at the end of the last hour of your, perhaps, third analysis, you shake hands with your analyst and leave his office for the last time —at just that moment you hear a song, a snatch of melody from the radio of a passing convertible, feel again the pressure of a girl's head on your shoulder when you danced with her to that song, years ago . . . the fumbling tenderness comes back and you feel an ache of longing . . . for something—not the girl, something else—something which has no name, lies beyond your grasp, and you know that analysis, however fine its net, could not capture this elusive anguish.

Yet so much there is of good, and of such pleasure: iced tea in summer in the south when one is a boy, the glass clouding purple, lemon gleaming yellow, and the thrilling coldness, the pungent sweetness; swimming at La Jolla in crystal water with the kelp waving and bright fish flashing by; and this quintet of Boccherini, and books that catch your heart and sweep you into the lives of others; and friendship and the love of woman . . . and so much more. But still a bondage; for all this goodness, pleasure, is our mandate; in its pursuit is our compliance.

THERE are rebels among us, of a kind; I see two here. Martin von Haffner, wealthy, aristocratic, defending Communists in defiance of class and of state. And Amory Stone, golf pro, despite scandal, the anger of husbands, and the shrill and never still tongue of his thin embittered wife of nineteen married years, forever sliding hungry hands up the trembling thighs of other men's wives—"Every golfer," he says, "needs a hobby!" Skirmishes at the surface, defiance only of convention; to the twisted law of neurosis, compliance—the obedient living out of hatred of a father in the one, of quest for a mother in the other, and of God knows what else in both, but compliance nevertheless—just the ways they happen to dance to the piper who jigs us all. No rebellion here, but meekness; like singing "Nearer My God to Thee" as the *Titanic* goes down, like the pacific processions at Auschwitz, and oh the wild tearing sadness that we too, sentenced to die and well on our way, should move with such patience, such kindly grace and decorum, as this fine company seated here in orderly rows with tranquil upturned faces—charabanc to the churchyard.

Is there then no rebellion? The mandate of life is to live—to avoid death, to enlarge life, to live as well, as fully, according to our natures, as we can, for as long as possibly can be contrived. The only real rebellion then would be the sacrifice of life: not to cling and hang on and hold back, as we are ordered, but to give it up by choice. This is our only glove to throw in the face of existence. Not suicide, not the neurotic act, for that too is compelled; but to part with life freely, without sickness. How? To value

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something more than life—what?—some part of living more than the whole of one's individual life. Something, something . . . the creation of music, the discovery of truth, the loving of others—to die for such by choice, *that's* what I would do. To declare a love of life, and to give allegiance to it, by creating something which would enlarge the lives of all, at the same time defying the sentence of death by giving up one's life, precisely to achieve this creation, before it is called for—that's what I want. Give me an image!

A village square, a fountain, a spray of water pulsing in the wind; sunlight and a streamer of rainbow, and around the square the life of the village: the few—exploiters, manipulators, parasites—who serve only themselves, and the many who serve others while serving themselves; the mother caring for her child, the doctor tending the sick, the baker baking, the housewife cleaning, the psychoanalyst analyzing; children rolling hoops in the street, young people swimming and lying in the sun, everywhere the pursuit of the fullness of life; in a shuttered room the architect seducing the doctor's wife, while from the tavern comes a polka and the splash of beer, and under the plane tree old men playing chess. But there is one who does none of these things, who sits at the fountain dreaming, watching in the spray of water, curtained by wind and jeweled by sun, a pulsing flag only he can see and none but him will follow, who will die young, having traded a part of life for the making of beauty. This is the real defiance; this is what I would do.

BUT I HAVE tried and failed. I feel, at the mere thought, a sick aversion. I have no knack, can find no path, would fail again. Begin to act—even at random—and you begin to hope. Begin to hope and you will perceive your action makes sense, that it keeps the ship afloat and on a steady course, that you will come to a safe harbor rather than a bad end. Is it only by not acting one gives up illusion? Can it be this hard for all who create? And is this really a wish to give something, or a disguise for the wish to get? To wrest something from the world, fame perhaps? How be sure? This doubt can impugn every motive, halt every action, insure that I do nothing, ever. What is it I lack—talent or courage? This is all in darkness.

Anyway, even should I succeed, might it not still be a dance to an unheard tune? To me an improvisation, but to the puppeteer, moving me on unseen threads, just a routine? The poet in the square may be acting out a given destiny, however obscure, as surely as the rest of us—to my eyes rebellion, to some higher vision compliance. Might it not in fact already have been determined that I go through this argument with myself today, that I struggle in just this way toward a decision that, unknown to me, is foregone? What is the issue? To try to create something of value . . . or to hell with it! But is this a decision I'm *going* to make—or one already made for me by complex and immeasurable causes, fixed within me as an unveering potentiality, to be revealed in time in the illusion of will?

I don't know. Can one know such a thing? Would it make a difference?

Perhaps a great difference; for if the issue is already settled I shall lose interest—do now lose interest even at the thought—even without knowing which way it has been settled. This kind of thinking is work—or the illusion of work which is just as hard and, being useless, is worse—and I'll not do it for nothing. If I regard myself as a puppet, I'll forget the whole problem, will give myself over to the enjoyment of the music, will attend to the grace of my wife's ankle, her sweet sensuous mouth, will try to live with more style; for if a life can leave no residue of value then the performance is all. What a good life this is with the love of this woman, with health, and the sun coming up every morning. A thousand blessings and no cause for complaints, and why am I spoiling a marvelous afternoon? Who could have more cause to be happy?

In this way would I dismiss a morbid mood . . . or would try. And if this didn't work I'd turn on it the tools of my trade, would invoke from childhood the faded image of an implacable father, restate the error of his ways with me, affirm the sense of guilt he must have instilled, then aim the old interpretation: this restlessness, this nagging wish to create, this view of life as a procession to the grave, all this is but the compulsion to expiate a fantasied murder. And if the melancholy still would not yield

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I might take myself for further analysis to another of my own kind, to a master mechanic of mind, inviting him to treat me as a mechanism, asking him, not for suspension of causality in psychological affairs, but for new links in the causal chain, interpretations to divert the outcome—quite ignoring the curious paradox (he being as much a puppet as I, his interpretations as fully determined as my ailment, and my very going to him as unavoidable as his responding in his particular ways) that nothing new could occur, only the mechanical unfolding of what was there all along and inevitable.

If, however, I should take the view that what I shall decide is still open—not just unknown but really open, not fixed by antecedents, unpredictable at this point by any intelligence however superior, even by Laplace's omniscient demon—I would incline to continue the struggle, to anguish over it, try to think it out, find my way. Because the decision would be mine, something made, a creation.

So it does make a difference and I must take a stand. What have I—choice or the illusion of choice? That intention may determine action is not in question; but what of intention? Is it but a proximate cause, itself the effect of preceding causes, extending in iron-locked linkage backward in time, ramifying, unbroken, endless? Or may will create something new, something not possibly to have been predicted from any prior state? Freedom, if it exists, has limits: I have such a body as this, I bleed; have two eyes not ten, live at 98° not 120°, am impelled by drives—sexual, aggressive; eventually will die. But within these limits what am I—free or simply unaware of the strings that move me? Is this something that can be reasoned out? What is determined is predictable—if one knows the general laws and the initial and intervening conditions. If everything is determined, so also must be this issue I'm grappling with—to create or not to care. Could this decision, to my knowledge unmade as yet, be at this moment predicted?

Not possible, I think, not even in principle, not even if I knew all—all events, all forces, ill impingements which had bearing, inner and outer, past and present, in measured quanta, infinite ramification . . . not even then. For the predicting would itself inject something new, itself a cause; and there would be no getting around it, not even if I could take this new cause into account, weigh it, foresee its effects near and far—not even then; for just this "taking into account" would again deflect my aim. Nor could anyone else, however fully informed, predict for me; for his observings would alter the observed in unmeasurable ways. Always there is something left over, always the future eludes us.

EXHILARATION in this . . . and paradox. To view the world as determined, this has been man's courage, even impertinence, and his glory—an assumption most radical, inviting us to isolate segments of experience into closed systems, to discover their regularities, formulate their laws, and so to control the world; and we have: bridges and planes and hospitals and ships, and all of civilization bear witness. But to view ourselves—our visions, our very impertinence—as determined, this is an assumption most conservative, inviting us to conform to such laws of our nature as we may imagine. Can only imagine, never know, for we are involved; and can no more demonstrate than could we the laws of falling bodies in an atmosphere of random rifle fire. By assuming ourselves to be cogs in a mechanical universe, our lives the ticks of the great clock, we encourage ourselves—subtly, unwittingly—to act as we have always acted, to believe as we have always believed. Implicitly we encourage our patients to disparage will, to assume that nothing can be done until insight is complete. We postulate an indwelling essence that determines our lives, regard it as natural law; then come to feel (senselessly, for natural law is that which cannot be disobeyed) that we must act in accord with this essence, as if a break with the past were a breach of decorum, disagreeable, willful. Determinism leads us thus to label the leap as a sickness—Gauguin sailing for Tahiti is "acting out"—and in the very next breath to deny that it is a leap at all, to see it rather as consonant with concealed tendencies, indeed as the unavoidable product of neurotic conflict, even predictable. Not believing in freedom we become inattentive to the choices wherein it is manifest, assume we cannot reshape our lives, that a world state is impossible, that war is

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inevitable; and so it comes about that dreams are to be analyzed, that visions indicate psychosis—and freedom slips away.

ORTEGA Y GASSET would have me believe that there is within me a destiny—a vocation in the largest sense of this word—which lies behind my "actual life like its mysterious root, as the hand lies behind the thrown dart," an "authentic I" which calls but does not compel: I may evade it, run from it, and so perjure my being, or may turn to it as my task, grapple toward its realization. This is Luther's "I can do no other," and I have had such moments, I know the feeling. Is this a guide?

But what—or who?—is this self to which I should be true? Something innate, inscribed in origins and depths? I find it inscribed only in past choices and their consequences. Who am I?—why none other than he who chose this work, took this wife, fathered these children, made those countless commitments and undertook those myriad responsibilities in which my life is now webbed. The more consistent these choices—with each other and with prior choices—the more integrated the self which they progressively shape; the more integrated this self the more compelling will be its demand that further choices accord with its values, coincide with its direction; and the further this process is extended, in time and in number of committing decisions, the stronger the self will become, the more nearly irresistible its mandate, until it may at last defy any power on earth and lead one to the stake rather than to recant. This is the destiny which is character. And still nothing, even so, can guarantee its rightness. There was no blueprint, nothing prior to the free and therefore ultimately arbitrary choices with which it was built. Its authenticity is its wholeness.

Gauguin at thirty-five appeared the authentic banker; only the break in his life reveals the split, the identity of artist behind the role of banker. We say "role" of banker because it's past and we *know,* but how was it for Gauguin? How could he know what was structure and what was facade? "Am I a banker with a hankering to paint, or an artist hiding in a banker's life?" It would have been a comfort to him to label his leaning as destiny, to "realize," as it were, that an unseen hand had set him on the trajectory of artist, but could he believe that? Can we?—when the warring identities are themselves arbitrary, being but the result of two series of choices diverging now too far for one life to hold, and perhaps neither, if there *were* a destiny, meant for him? God's finger does not point: he made a leap, evicted the banker, gave the artist room to spread out, and so began a series of choices which created a self we think more authentic than the old—and so indeed it was if it fused into wholeness the passionate fragments of his nature. As Tahitian artist he disappears from our view, but it is only his death which makes that identity final. To live is to choose and so to continue to be shaped by choice, and a self which has hardened into final immutable shape is dead though its bearer may still breathe and move. Were Gauguin alive and making choices how could we know where they would carry him? Further in the same direction? Perhaps. But how be sure they would not again set his life on a different course, so creating a different self, even one as far surpassing in integration, and hence authenticity, the artist as the artist had surpassed the banker?

There is no help here. To be true to myself is no guide, for it means being true only to what I already am in whole or in part and so can lead to nothing new. To believe the task of my life to be already decided, like orders from headquarters which I as soldier must find and execute . . . this is a turning away from the ultimate choice. The orders I'm most concerned with are those yet to be written, by me. Anxiety may lead me to disclaim creation, construe it as discovery, for much, even most, of life is necessity, but beyond constraint there lies in darkness a realm of freedom where there is no design until I make it. Here is the possibility of creation. Here the question is not "Who am I?" but "Who shall I be?" Who . . . ?

BUT MIGHT there not be, I must ask, an orderliness inaccessible to me, undemonstrable but invincible, of even the most tenuous events of dream and heart and thought, of these very questionings down to the last twist and comma, an orderliness such that —could one know all yet affect nothing— the future could be seen? Such that, given

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the 19th century, the history of the 20th could be written in full? Such that, given in its entirety any instant in time, all future instants could be charted?

Along the wall move two columns of ants, one toward the winery, empty-handed, the other away from it with grain. Were it possible for one of these ants to consider this problem, what conclusions would his position in life make possible? That one there, for example, the big one, on his way to the winery but taking his time about it, turning around, standing up and looking about, stopping his returning colleagues, sniffing their burdens, lording it over them, tempted I think to snatch a grain, join the returning column, and so short-cut the trip. He would declare his freedom, I'm sure of it, would say he goes where he pleases, and find in his erratic excursions cogent proof. And should some scientist-ant—to press this analogy as far as possible—set about to prove him wrong, to portray his behavior as determined, this very effort might send the big one scurrying off the path, so, all the more conclusively, to establish his freedom. But I have a larger view and see a lawfulness unknown to him. He is constrained to this path; I know where he will go, when return, and with what burden. His freedom, if he feels it, is illusory.

And might there not exist somewhere a point of view as detached from me as mine from these ants—an intelligence as superior—to which every aspect of my life—including even this decision I've not yet "made"—is seen as an immutable sequence of cause and effect and hence predictable? How can I know? I can't, I suppose, nor can I dismiss it; I am given pause by the thought of an ant's denying *my* existence, and of his never knowing the fatuousness of his error.

But what, if it should exist, would be the nature of such an intelligence? It could not be that of a man, for a man's observations would be interventions. It would have to be as far removed from us as we from the ants, as superior to us in knowledge and understanding, able to know and measure our most intimate vaporous fancies, including these very speculations, without affecting what was known and measured—in a word, God.

Suppose, then, I postulate God—simply as a vantage point for the observation of man as determined. Such a postulate cannot establish determinism in the affairs of men, but makes the assumption logically tenable. But does not, I discover immediately, dispel the issue of freedom. For what about God's acts? God's thoughts? God's observations? Are they determined. If not determined, then there *does* exist something outside causality. If determined, then I must postulate a super-God in order to make sense of the assumption that God is not free.

Determinism, it appears, smuggles the idea of freedom past the custom officials of science. Laplace supposes that a demon, fully informed about every particle in the universe, could predict the future—and so, unnoticed, locates freedom with the demon, without whom the image is lost. Always we impute the existence of something, somewhere, which can act in a way that not even in principle could be predicted. For freedom is another word for life; without it there is nothing, not even determinism. If we think of the lawfulness of falling bodies, we presuppose a human intelligence free to experiment, to measure the fall of iron and apples and feathers, in air and in vacuum and in windstorm. And if we shift attention to the creativity of the experimenter and regard that too as determined, then—whether we know it or not—we locate freedom in a suprahuman experimenter. Determinism, declaring no exception, rests solidly on an exception. The idea of freedom is inalienable; if we deny it to ourselves we ascribe it to gods.

So, then, where locate it? There may indeed be a level of observation from which the life of man may be seen as determined; lack of evidence cannot prove its non-existence. Likewise there may, beyond that, be an even higher level of observation from which events at the intermediate level would be predictable. One such, or two . . . or many. Or none. Here knowledge ends in choice: our lives are determined and there is a God; or our lives are free and man is God. This is metaphysics, there is no evidence here; both positions are logical, neither is subject to falsification.

Where lies my heart? Either way I may be wrong; so which error, I must ask, would I rather risk—to be an arrogant puppet who thinks he's a god, or a humble god who

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thinks he's a puppet? For me the answer is clear, better try for too much than too little; I elect to believe our future is unwritten, that we create it as we will.

But freedom is not fortuity, does not war with continuity, means only that we may make out of past and present something new, something which is not a mechanical unfolding and cannot have been foretold, that no law limits how far we may go, how wide, how deep. We are gods because we create.

And I? Tomorrow the sun will rise on the same routine, and what can all this mean? What can I create? Where is the poetry of which I am capable? Of what nature? Where can I. . . .

APPLAUSE and the conductor bowing, the audience to its feet with bravos, the orchestra standing . . . then an ending; the scraping of chairs, musicians beginning to leave the stage, the audience breaking up, people turning to each other . . . hello, hello, wasn't it simply marvelous . . . false smiles, ladies comparing dresses, jewelry, wrinkles, the color of hair, men comparing bosoms, hips, thighs, ankles; champagne around the swimming pool with talk of music and books, introductions to a vintner, a violist, and a critic; dinner on the terrace with four wines, introductions to a judge, an economist, and a college student, talk of delinquency and taxes and schools; then the long walk to the car, cool now with the sun dropping behind the fog bank, the winding road down the mountain, down, down, in darkening twilight and finally the freeway (from the mountain an ant trail, but here a whine and threat and roar of cars), a glare in the mirror of weaving lights separating into two streams to pass, the sharp licking sound of tires as the road gets wet in the dripping fog; then the flashing red lights and stopped cars and . . . yes, yes . . . the twisted metal, the broken glass, the smell of gasoline, and there by the road (my wife's fingernails biting my arm) a man on a heap of gravel as if on a bier, ashen face turned to the black sky; then beside him waiting for the ambulance . . . about twenty, I'd say, and now a fractured skull, and oh . . . how to live? How to live? and will this one get another chance? . . . nothing to do but hope and see that he breathes, and . . . how will he use it if he gets another chance? How ever can we find our way out of this murk? Then the siren, white sheets and stretcher and he's gone, and I'm back in the car, wife trembling on my arm, and we go on, lost, in this night of blinding lights and confusing signs—and it has to be this way, we want it too easy, want a routine of creation, a paved road into the unknown, but darkness is our workshop, here creation begins . . . and still time to try.

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MICHAEL FIXLER

BERNARD BERENSON OF BUTREMANZ

In 1888 the *Harvard Monthly* published a short story by Bernard Berenson, a recent graduate of the University. The story concerns the terrible fate of a young *shtetl* prodigy who, having enjoyed the culture of the gentile world, is overtaken by the revenge of the *kahal.* One day this young man, Israel Koppel, suddenly falls ill and is plunged into a deep coma. The *chevra kedusha* hastens to bury him. But when his father, himself a beadle of the brotherhood, comes home from the cemetery to a troubled sleep, he dreams that he is confined in a close space, in darkness of smothering density, so that he can scarcely move. At last the father awakes to a horrified realization. He demands that the coffin be opened, and when the lid is lifted, Israel Koppel's battered, anguished face and contorted limbs testify to a hideous error: he has been buried alive.

The theme of the story, as well as its violence of expression, are hard to associate with the man we think of as the serene connoisseur who strolled with kings down the tree-lined walks of his villa, *I Tatti,* and who has been described as "the most sensitive precision instrument that has ever been applied to the study of Italian art." Yet the motifs and mood of the story prefigure in a striking and somber way some of the concerns that obsessed Berenson throughout his life, and of which he was not always consciously aware. As a passionate representation of his deepest fears, the fable—in contrast to the polished superficiality of his other early fiction—exposes the feelings behind Berenson's own repudiation of the ghetto and of his Jewish loyalties. The Jew who yearned for the culture of the gentile world and yet remained within the Jewish one would be, in the most harrowing psychological sense, buried alive.

In those early days Berenson knew of only one "buried life," the "true self" which, as Matthew Arnold's poetry taught him, yearned to seek out its "true, original course" and find in the best of art and culture mystic communion with the whole world. What he did not then so readily see was the possibility of another "buried life," the one suppressed by the Jew who, adventuring out into the gentile world, buried his Jewish past. That he might be haunted by the vexatious ghost of an unrealized original self was something that he feared. That it would turn out to be his Jewish self was not what he had expected.

To a man's friends his inner life is not usually familiar ground upon which to encounter him. And there is a customary reserve in the circle of a dead man's friends which discourages any very close look at what may have been the main concern of his life. The biography by Sylvia Sprigge, for example, tenderly skirts the real issue, leaving the heart of

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Berenson's personality a mystery. And when Meyer Schapiro suggested [*Encounter,* January 1961] that Berenson's values were partially confused by an "uneasiness with his Jewish origins" as well as by the guilt of having exploited his gifts in the market place, the article was bitterly attacked by Berenson's friends. He had his own apprehensiveness about falling into the hands of biographers and "interpreters." What, after all, should these people know about what really counted, about the pain, the hopes, the ideals, the betrayals and self-betrayals, the effort and the cost, which he ceaselessly tried to square within himself while yet maintaining his cardinal belief that life was enhanced by being lived as an art?

If he felt all along that the problem of portraying him objectively was very difficult, it came to seem almost impossible after World War II. Suddenly he was prime copy for the slick picture magazines and the Sunday press. Here was not merely a relic of the gilded age, or an aesthete with a Midas touch, but a kind of mass media sage—invested with the special sanctity reserved for those whose worldly success is capped by the reputation for wisdom. From a distance his famous villa outside Florence took on the glamor of the legendary ivory tower, enchantingly indestructible though two armies had battered their way through the backyard. "I end," Berenson commented dryly, "as a myth whose saga I can scarcely recognize as having any relation to what I feel or think I know about myself, my deep down self."

WHAT he feared others might miss or misunderstand was that identity—his identity—was fantastically complicated and not something that could be tagged by simple labels. From beginning to end he showed a remarkable concern with that intractable problem. His earlier books explore the possibilities and manifestations of identity with a professional detachment that does not quite conceal his own involvement with his subjects. But in the last years of his long life (he died at the age of ninety-four) his concern for the truth about his "deep down self" led him to return over and over again to reflecting upon the root of the matter—his origins—and in particular upon the questions of Jewishness and assimilation.* This was also the substance of a ten-year correspondence he carried on with the widow of a German rabbi, Frau Mally Dienemann, who had read his *Sketch for a Self Portrait* and asked him to clarify a certain ambiguity: in what sense that he would admit, could he be called a Jew? The answer was not then, or ever, direct or simple, but it was no longer a question he could or wished to avoid. Everywhere he tried to answer that question almost in the same breath that he tried to account to himself for the sense of failure that dogged his life, despite every outward sign of success. Yet he never once would link the two. The connection, however, cries out, almost in anguish, in everything that he wrote about himself. For his failure was the failure of his convictions, and his convictions derived from the innermost attempt to free himself of the burden of his Jewish identity.

He had been born and spent his early childhood in the *shtetl* of Butremanz in Lithuania. When he was ten, his family emigrated and he felt as if he were being born all over again. To Frau Dienemann he confided that in his first year in Boston he led a completely double life. By day he learned English and tried to adjust to

* See particularly the *Sketch for a Self Portrait* (Pantheon Books, 1949) and *Rumour and Reflection* (Simon and Schuster, 1952). Where it is not from unpublished letters, the material quoted or paraphrased here is largely drawn from these works as well as *Aesthetics and History* (Pantheon Books, 1948) and the recently collected *Bernard Berenson Treasury,* edited by Dr. Hanna Kiel (Simon and Schuster, 1962). The *Treasury* provides a good deal of fragmentary, hitherto unpublished correspondence and diary entries. Some of Berenson's most interesting criticism, long out of print, is also now republished in *The Sense of Quality* and *Rudiments of Connoisseurship* (Schocken Books, 1962).

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American ways, but at night he dreamed of the flat gray landscapes of his native village and of the life there to which he had so indivisibly belonged. As his family sank into the settled poverty of immigrant Jewish life in the 1870's, the conflict in him grew sharper. Between the ages of ten and twenty, he lived, as he wrote in a post-Harvard piece on Matthew Arnold, "alone with my thoughts and anguish and despair."

Confronting him was a world of values which denied that what he was, a poor East European Jewish immigrant boy, had any other but a marginal, negligible significance. Nonetheless he already was passionately absorbing the art and literature of that world to which he was an outsider and an object, as he imagined, of contempt. Even in what he absorbed he was rejected, for in that art and literature the Jew figured as a despised outcast. And it was that world, that culture, he felt he had to possess or die. He resolved the dilemma by accepting the gentile valuation as his own; he learned first to hate, and then to reject himself. Almost seventy years later he was to understate the case remarkably to Frau Dienemann: "We Jews tend to think of ourselves as prejudice paints us."

YET if Berenson could no longer accept himself as a Jew, the very tension generated by the problem of his identity came to serve him as a source of creativity. Even the self-detachment he learned as a means of defense during those adolescent years was converted into the introspective objectivity that marked his style for the rest of his life. More importantly, the inner urgency to shape somehow a new identity to replace the old one—to discover his buried self—supplied the energy of will for wreaking that astonishing transformation upon himself and his life style that remains Berenson's sizable, not to say staggering, achievement.

To some extent, Berenson's essential problem—and its paradoxically energizing consequences—was the typical experience of those marginal Jews formed by the Enlightenment, though his solution was a good deal more dramatic. The liberal individualist ethos of the 19th century endlessly repeated one basic lesson which Berenson, like his fellow outsiders, passionately absorbed. The highest aim of society was to encourage full development of the best potentialities of man's nature. But each choice involves suppression of alternative possibilities; hence, a man must be strong enough to destroy the inert selves which keep him from freedom. "A complete life," he eventually wrote in the *Self Portrait*, "may be one ending in so full an identification with the not-self that there is no self left to die." Troubled by this, and no doubt unversed in the conventions of the debate, Frau Dienemann asked the pertinent question. Who then is the "I," the true self? To this Berenson replied that all the selves we recognize within us are real. "The mystery is why we choose one and suppress the other."

Berenson's choice was more radical than that required of most other emancipated Jewish intellectuals and is hard to think of as a "mystery." From the outset, his yearning was not merely the ambition of the immigrant boy fired by the American myth of opportunity, but a hunger for identification with the best of art and life and learning, to which he appeared hopelessly an outsider. Nothing his Jewishness could offer seemed adequate compensation for what it took away, and nothing but a thorough suppression of his Jewish "self" would enable him to satisfy his yearning. It was no mere accident that soon led him to choose painting—perhaps the art form most alien to the Jewish tradition as he knew it at the time—as the particular province of his self-development.

The duality of this early period in his life is vividly dramatized by a story Sylvia Sprigge tells. The young Berenson, then an undergraduate at Harvard and already a sometime visitor to the salons of Back

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Bay Boston, was being entertained in the parlor of Louisa May Alcott. During the visit an itinerant peddler who occasionally appeared at the Alcotts' came to the back door with his pack. It was none other than Berenson's father, known generally to his customers as a philosophical "character." Miss Alcott, ignorant of the relationship, guilelessly remarked on the coincidence —a young and clever man, also called Berenson, was just then being entertained in the front of the house. Berenson the elder immediately gathered up his wares and fled in confusion.

Tacitly father and son felt the bond to each other and to the past to be a bond of shame and constraint. Nevertheless Berenson seemed in retrospect to have sensed the pathos of what had happened. A book he recommended to Sylvia Sprigge as an exact representation of his childhood, *L'Ombre de la Croix,* by Jerome and Jean Tharaud, describes the death of a ghetto youth to Judaism and his rebirth into the gentile world with its wider horizons. At the end of the novel the apparition—an emancipated Jew whose assimilation has enabled him to become a force in the world—confronts the old Jew who had raised him and who pitiably reminds him of the past. The Tharauds wrote with that peculiar mixture of love-hate that marks the philo-Semite who is in the process of turning into an anti-Semite. But they caught the dilemma in all its intense ambivalent strength. Which was the young Jew to choose—the ghetto and superstitious "Rabbinism," or the free life of culture and art?

Berenson chose the free life and became an ardent advocate of assimilation. He was convinced that only the negative forces of Rabbinism and persecution had effectively kept the Jews together after Christianity had, in effect, relegated them to the limbo of historical anachronisms. He wondered whether it was still desirable for Judaism to survive. Might it not better die, *mourir en beauté,* and release into the stream of a greater, freer life all those restless souls who yearned to realize their "best" selves?

The dead weight of Jewishness inhibiting freedom became for him the bogey of Rabbinism. Just as art was for him "life-enhancing," rabbinical orthodoxy represented the spirit of life-diminishment. In his early writings one finds Rabbinism symbolized repeatedly in terms of oppressive physical and spiritual constraint. Convinced, as he later was, that beauty of worship justifies even the absence of faith, he had long since been permanently alienated from Jewish ritual by what he felt to be its lack of external beauty and character, represented by the hole-in-the-corner little *shulen* in the Boston slums where he grew up. They were shabby and durable, and to the young aesthete the two Jewish qualities seemed one and the same. Thus his first sight of one of the great Reform synagogues of Berlin came as a shock; for the first and last time he shed his customary reticence about discussing Jewish matters with his Boston patroness, the famous Isabella Gardner. He described to her in a letter the surprising beauty of the synagogue, the choir, and the formal service. Yet no sooner had he said this than he found it necessary to mock his own response. Despite their attempts to achieve elegance, the letter continues, "the worshippers . . . as my Norwegian friend remarked, seemed to be selling old clothes." A man can conceive so intense a self-hatred, Berenson would later write to Frau Dienemann, that only self-destruction appears as a solution. But self-destruction can take several forms, one of them being a prelude to the rebirth of conversion.

BERENSON'S first conversion was a token one; at Harvard (where no one really believed it) he passed as a nominal Episcopalian, listing his birthplace as Lithuania and his mother tongue as German. Yet even during this period he could not escape his own ambivalence and was drawn again and again to ex-

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amine the way other Jewish intellectuals had faced the problem of self-realization. This is the point of a long essay he wrote in 1888 for the *Andover Theological Review* on the then current renaissance in Hebrew fiction, and the meaning of the emergence of such writers as Mapu, Smolenskin, Shaikevitsch, and Buchbinder. At the start Berenson assumed a foppish anti-Semitic pose, which gradually fell away as he warmed to his subject. In these writers Berenson discovered a heartening precedent—Jewish intellectuals and artists were breaking from the rabbinical tyranny of the *kahal* (those "communes where no individuality was possible") to encounter the gentile world. Smolenskin's story, "The Ass's Burial," brought to his mind the *chevra kedusha,* the burial society through which rabbinical Judaism "exercised a most tyrannical rule through the Jewish communities in Russia." Not long after, Berenson wrote "The Death and Burial of Israel Koppel."

Late in life Berenson would remark that Jewishness could no longer be shed merely by conversion, but as a young man this was not as obvious to him, even though his conversion to Episcopalianism had scarcely been a spiritual experience. In the generally accepted sense he did not have faith nor would he ever achieve it, but his aesthetic response to Christianity seemed in the 1880's tolerably good grounds for a conversion. (Walter Pater gave no better reason for offering himself to Benjamin Jowett as a candidate for holy orders in the Anglican Church, and, as Berenson wrote Frau Dienemann, he shared with Pater's Marius the Epicurean a "tropism toward Christianity.") In "The Third Category," another story written for the *Harvard Monthly,* Berenson's hero, Christie, is described as having "no religious feelings or beliefs, but he had the profoundest admiration for Christianity . . . he thought [it] the greater part of all the beautiful things the mind and hand of man have created during the past fifteen hundred years."

After he left Harvard to discover art and life in Europe, Berenson met Mary Pearsall Smith, then married to Frank Costelloe, a prominent Irish barrister practicing in London. Of a wealthy American Quaker family, Mary was the sister of the scholar-critic Logan Pearsall Smith and was to be the sister-in-law of Bertrand Russell. Her children by Frank Costelloe were also to relate her to the Stracheys and the Stephenses, Virginia Woolf's family. The society for whom art existed, for whose sake it might almost be said art was created, was now not only open to Berenson, but welcomed him avidly. "When this beautiful and mysterious youth appeared, for whom nothing in the world existed except a few lines of poetry which he held to be perfect, . . . I felt like a dry sponge that was put into water," Mary later wrote.

BERENSON'S second conversion—to Catholicism—coincided with the period of his most intense study of Renaissance painting. At Spoleto he experienced a "direct contact with otherness . . . [that] made me feel as if I had emerged into the light after long groping in the darkness . . . every outline, every edge, and every surface was in a living relation to me and not as hitherto, in a merely cognitive one." As he felt the barrier of self dissolving by the death of the old Jewish Adam there were other occasions for joy. Shortly after his conversion he wrote Mary a euphoric letter from Perugia. He was lost in the bliss of belonging at last. "How I used to loathe myself for being one of those whom . . . Heaven rejects and Hell disdains. . . . Today I felt so at one with everybody. I even felt reconciled to the brass band. . . . Why not walk in step with it sweetly and gladly, instead of paralyzing my legs by trying to march in another step?" Strolling along with the crowds in the Corso of a Sunday afternoon after Mass, Berenson seemed once and for all to have escaped the clutches of the *chevra kedusha.* Five years later, after the death

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of her husband in 1899, Mary Costelloe became Mary Berenson.

The religious impulse which brought Berenson to the Roman Catholic Church did not last very long and his innate skepticism soon reasserted itself. Yet he continued to venerate Christianity as the source of ritual and art, the formal means by which, as he claimed, the self in all its limitations could be transcended. It was as he developed this conviction that he discovered his vocation. The letters to Isabella Gardner gradually change in tone as self-pity and uncertainty give way to enthusiasm. More or less simultaneously he found himself in love with Renaissance painting, with Catholicism, and with Mary Costelloe. The first two were for him indistinguishable, for he could never accept Catholicism as a body of doctrine. To Frau Dienemann he wrote in 1950: "I share your aversion to the dogma of a mediator and to any notion that weakens the sense of individual responsibility. In fact I cannot understand how people whose intelligence in other matters I respect can put up with any kind of theology, Christian in particular." And when the Church that year proclaimed the Dogma of the Assumption of the Madonna, Berenson marveled at the childishness of Catholic theologians, who were wasting their "energies on justifying the childish fairy-world cry for a goddess. For that is what the Virgin is—as pagan as Aphrodite."

But then he wrote: "In the cathedrals of Chartres and Bourges I felt exalted, transfigured, and could not but be deeply grateful to the inspiration which produced them. No dogmatic, metaphysical, or historical considerations can contradict the revelation of the visual, the verbal, the musical arts . . . I am happy to find God *sub speciae* of Christ, the Virgin, the Saints, and for me they are TRUTHS without being FACTS." No one ever uttered the creed of *fin de siècle* romantic aestheticism more forcefully—and this so long past its heyday. Yet when he wrote this he had long realized that his conviction was no longer quite adequate. The band was still playing on the Corso, but now, as originally, he was out of step. "I feel Christian," he insisted to Frau Dienemann, "although no Christian Church would accept me. *Ich bleib jenseits—!*"

His dilemma, in one sense, may be most clearly recognized in terms of his assumptions about art. What Berenson believed was that *aesthetic* experience was the great reality, and religious conviction was merely a series of constructive momentary illusions based upon it. The illusions were constructive, or "life-enhancing," because the pursuit of aesthetic certainties was for Berenson a quest, in the extended sense of that term in Victorian art, where the end pursued in the aesthetic experience is sacred by virtue of the faith that its attainment must produce a revelation that would bind together the dissevered parts of the self and also establish its harmony with the universe. This was the heart of Berenson's aesthetic creed, and he expressed it in the literal, physical terms he had used to express his problem of identity.

As in "Israel Koppel" the oppressive account of being buried alive betrayed Berenson's horror of being hemmed in, imprisoned within himself and within the ghetto of Jewish identification; so too the sense of liberation from self and communion with the limitless via the apprehension of art, carried with it physical sensations of well-being, of easy breathing, of heightened sensitivity bordering on the mystical. Two of his key aesthetic principles—"space composition" and "tactile values"—are based upon this translation of the gesture of perception into psychophysiological and quasi-mystical terms.

> Space composition . . . woos us away from our tight, painfully limited selves, dissolving us into the space presented, until at last we seem to become its permeating indwelling spirit . . . this wonderful art can take us away from ourselves and give us, while we are under its spell, the feeling of being identified with the

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universe, perhaps even of being the soul of the universe.

> Tactile values refer to our corporeal contacts with the outside world; visceral values refer to the feeling of comfort or discomfort inside our bodies; respirational values (which I equivalate with spatial ones) refer to our feelings of liberation, of freedom from heaviness, and to the illusion of soaring into harmonious relations with sky and horizon.

These ideas are closely related to the thought of Pater, Matthew Arnold, and most importantly, William James, whose psychology course at Harvard Berenson, like Santayana, absorbed thoroughly. Both James and Santayana expounded a naturalistic aesthetics, correlating the stimuli of art with linked physiological reactions, emotions, and heightened, pleasurable intellectual apperceptions. But one consistent emphasis was uniquely Berenson's—the central identification of the whole aesthetic process with the transcendence of self.

BERENSON'S aesthetic theories assumed the reality and hence the intrinsic validity of the aesthetic experience, but at the same time they granted that the experience is compounded of illusions. Thus, he had to admit that in the end art proved nothing beyond itself, and that the possibilities it offered of self-transcendence were painfully limited. "Man's problem," he wrote to Frau Dienemann, "is his relation to a universe which is, so far as we can understand, no cosmos."

The ultimate failure of art to provide certainties, the sense of moral compromise in the pursuit of his career, the elusiveness of that identity he had so relentlessly tracked, and the baleful reflected light which Nazi anti-Semitism cast upon his own self-repudiation, burdened Berenson's later years with an unshakable sense of failure. While he continued to plead the faith of his youth—that the human will, intellect, and heart were sufficient to create all the values by which men could live—Berenson now set out on a personal exploration with a detachment so profound it was mistaken by most readers for serenity. The monographs on identification and attribution were followed by *Sketch for a Self Portrait, Rumour and Reflection, One Year's Reading, The Passionate Sightseer,* and the publication of whole sections of his diary; the brilliant specialist seemed to have assumed his right to comment on existence as a whole. However, it was not commentary so much as a more urgent self-exploration. His life now as he summed it up represented not a clear progress toward fulfillment, but rather could be read as a desolate acknowledgment of incoherence in the self and its world. His one major speculative work to find completion in this period, *Aesthetics and History,* is less a treatise on the relationship of history and aesthetics than the unraveling of a highly personal train of thought around those two fixed points of reference for his unsuccessful attempts to define himself.

Berenson was aware that he had failed to achieve a masterwork and the awareness hinted further at some basic incoherence undermining his philosophy. When he is not dealing with the methods and techniques of connoisseurship, the characteristic quality of his writings is the absence of any coherence save that imposed by the force of the observing personality. His thought is fragmentary, apparently desultory, epigrammatic, conveying withal a sense of composure. It was as though he thought to preside over the incoherence of the self by the sheer force of that structuring intelligence with which he had commanded the world of connoisseurship. His explicit aim had always been to make of his life a work of art and he now probed at his failure to do so, much as had formerly dissected the inadequacies of this or that minor master. What he recorded was simply the incompatible bases of his convictions and how each in turn had failed him. On the one hand the aesthetic experience, the experience of art, was direct, intuitive, life-en-

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hancing, and suggested a freedom which was denied, on the other hand, by his whole sense of history and his sense of having been himself historically defined. The insights of Aesthetics and History could not be reconciled, for the former was the basis of his freedom, while the latter marked him as a Jew.

It was history, the Nazi occupation of Italy, which turned him into a Jewish fugitive, and so he tried to define himself more precisely in terms of the past that was punishing him—to force from history, as it were, the justification of his act of self-repudiation. This need explains the curiously extended discussion in *Rumour and Reflection,* his wartime diary, of the complex relationship of Judaism and Christianity, which he continued subsequently in his books, diaries, and in the letters to Frau Dienemann.

Historically Christianity grew, he suggested, out of the irrepressible tendency within Judaism toward assimilation. For Judaism the tropism was self-destructive and inevitably resisted from within, so that for the sake of an ethnic identity of questionable value the "civilizing" influences of other cultures in antiquity were rejected. Perhaps poor Ahab and Jezebel, so blackened by the anti-assimilationists of Scripture, represented a wholesome cosmopolitan impulse, while between them Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees cut short what might have become a remarkable pre-Christian fusion of Judaeo-Hellenic civilization. It was Jesus, however, the absolute Jew and the absolute universal man, who allowed Jewish genius its proper sphere, a world culture it could absorb and reshape in its own terms. Christianity was therefore the greatest triumph of Judaism, despite Jewish reluctance to accept the fact. But Judaism's rabbinical leaders, with a shrewd sense of the power of the word over Jews, buried Jesus by a conspiracy of silence. Down through the ages "Rabbinism" continued to be both the source and expression of Judaism's retrograde tendencies, the tyrannical power which sought to destroy free spirits like Uriel da Costa and Spinoza.

In the modern world, however, the tyranny of the rabbis had been brought under restraint (except in the state of Israel, where Berenson saw the Orthodox rabbinate as more dangerous to the state than the Arabs). Moreover, it had become outdated to look, as he had done in his youth, to conversion and absolute assimilation as a means of liberation. He now felt it possible that by *preserving* their identity the Jews could express in a new way the immemorial universalizing impulse of their people. They were to become the new humanists, liberated from petty nationalisms, preaching the unity of culture and the worth of the tradition Judaism had helped call into being.

Along with this vague ethical culturism Berenson demanded that Jews should cease to justify the anti-Semites' charges of vulgarity and social aggressiveness. The portrait he had in mind clearly reflects the prejudices most fashionable in high society before 1914, and to the end he could never rid himself of the standards he had first used in his act of self-repudiation. But increasingly, and particularly in the late 40's and 50's, he found more and more to admire in the accomplishments of Jewish scholarship and literature. To Frau Dienemann he wrote that he wished he had known men like her husband earlier. Frequently he discussed with great warmth the developments in Jewish life that impressed him most: the new state of Israel (which brought him around to ardent Zionism), Martin Buber, Joseph Klausner and Jewish historiography, COMMENTARY, and the emerging crop of American Jewish writers.

BY THEN he was also ready to admit that his self-repudiation had made him socially and psychologically vulnerable, that he had paid too high a price for access to that world which had seemed so impossibly distant in his youth. To be

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sure, he had been welcomed and genuinely befriended by many, but he had also been endlessly snubbed, insulted, and mocked, or accepted with reservations, spoken and unspoken. In the end he doubted that this precarious relation to the fashionable world of art and wealth was the freedom he had dreamed of. No intelligence or talent substituted for the birth and breeding he lacked and which made his relationship with Henry Adams, for example, painful. To justify his "natural aristocracy," Berenson reclaimed his Jewish heritage, an aristocracy of race which could not be denied him by external appraisal.

Now the buried Jewish self came into its own as a guardian of his self-integrity. But its strength wavered against the detached self-hatred of the other Berenson who ruthlessly pursued the logic of assimilation. It had been a continual torment to him to live in the estimation of others who projected back to him an image of himself that he could neither accept nor, in his self-repudiation, reject. He was snubbed as an outsider and a Jew, and he could not protest since he had concurred too long in society's right to limit the access of outsiders and Jews. Over and over again, particularly in the *Self Portrait,* and in the diary, he came back to his perennial pain at having to accept as his real self the image he saw reflected in the eyes of others. The pain was sharpened by the life-long habit acquired in those years between ten and twenty, when he had learned to look at himself with a hostile, alienated gaze. By an effort of will he had sought then to transform himself into something else—a work of art he could, by loving, accept. But this was, he saw, a new narcissism. For what, in fact, was the rapture of Narcissus? "Neither self-admiration nor auto-eroticism, but concentrated absorption in the problem of what relation there was between the self that he carried in his body and the reflected likeness."

When Berenson was a young man, in the 80's and 90's of the last century, a talented outsider could not only take heart from the creed of the limitless potentialities of human nature but also from the fashionable paradox that life imitated art. Joyously Berenson set out upon a voyage of self-discovery which was also to be a work of self-creation in the spirit of the artistic *Zeitgeist.* He proved the paradox, but not as he had expected. For the art that followed in the wake of the aestheticism which had created Bernard Berenson expressed and foreshadowed far different human potentials than had been dreamed of in the languorous 19th-century religion of Beauty. As a major symbol of that art, T. S. Eliot took Joseph Conrad's Mister Kurtz, whose exploration of self in *The Heart of Darkness* culminated in those famous whispered last words, "The Horror! The Horror!" In the still and absolutely untroubled waters of the pool of Narcissus neither Mister Kurtz nor Berenson nor the Western world heading toward 1939, could hold on to the Romantic faith in the limitless goodness of man.

THE LAST thing Berenson ever wrote (a diary entry, at the age of ninety-three) was a terrible final look into the pool of Narcissus. "Short of violence, I seem to have been capable of any sin, any misdemeanor, any crime. With horror I think what I should have been if I had lived the life of an ill-paid professor, or struggling writer, how rebellious if I had not lived a life devoted to great art, and the aristocratically pyramidal structure of society it serves, and worse still if I had remained in the all but proletarian condition I lived in as a Jewish immigrant lad in Boston. So I remain skeptical about my personality . . . expecting little and trying to be thankful for that, the serenity for which I am now admired. But I keep hearing the furies, and never forget them."

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JOHN GROSS

JOHN BULL & JOHN PROFUMO

London, July

WITH Mr. Macmillan still in office and the case of Dr. Ward still *sub judice,* the Profumo crisis has yet to run its course. But whatever the eventual outcome, one thing at least is already certain: the affair has made a notable contribution to the Public Happiness. A grizzled old Fleet Street veteran, notorious for his *taedium vitae,* was overheard boasting that he felt twenty years younger; the wife of a Cambridge don assured me, on the Sunday just after the bomb went off, that she had spent the happiest week-end of her life. These were perhaps extreme reactions, but everywhere one has noticed a new alertness, a new zest, a new sparkle. Normally sluggish dinner parties glow with animation; everyone is suddenly full of jokes and gossip and keyhole revelations. As yet the swirl of rumor (and slander) shows no signs of dying down, and there is still widespread speculation, as the papers say, about a longish roll call of famous names.

This hum and buzz of implication is hardly to be wondered at. After all, the proven facts are extraordinary enough in themselves. At one point it emerged that two of Christine Keeler's lovers were serving long jail sentences for assaulting her, a third was in hiding after having ruined his parliamentary career, a fourth held by police on charges of living on immoral earnings, and a fifth recalled to an unknown fate in the Soviet Union. Would the line stretch out to the crack of doom? The settings, too, were irresistible: the cabaret clubs, the old-world cottage, the mews flat with its two-way mirror. Above all there was Cliveden, stateliest of stately homes. It would have taken a recklessly melodramatic novelist to link such an Establishment stronghold with the sleazy, near-gangster world of some of Christine Keeler's friends. Now, ironically enough, as much fuss, if not more, is being made about Cliveden as in the days of Appeasement twenty-five years ago, when it was a source of *real* scandal, full of important guests who tended to have a warm regard for dear Herr von Ribbentrop.

Not that the idea of high life in high places will seem much of a novelty to students of either human nature or English history. More than one commentator has recalled Pope's lines about

Cliveden's proud alcove,
The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love.

Nor is there anything startlingly new about the *demi-monde* now being held under the magnifying glass. Great men have often raised their favorites from obscure beginnings; what gives the present case its bizarre quality is the overlapping of whole worlds which are normally kept far apart. Of the incongruous quartet of

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leading players, only Dr. Ward strikes one as being an intriguing personality in his own right; the others are interesting in terms of conduct rather than character. Profumo has the reputation of being an amiable weakling, quite undistinguished as a Minister, though with a certain pale glamor which comes from having married an actress. Christine Keeler is nice to look at, and (here she differs from her professional colleague, Marilyn Rice-Davies) there are few flaws to be seen in her façade charm; but the most sentimentally inclined could hardly claim that her liaison with Profumo was one of the great love affairs of the century. Ivanov makes a wooden impression: even the name seems a bit obvious. But Stephen Ward, skipping through the case like a troll, remains something of a conundrum. The son of a canon of Rochester Cathedral (the "Cloisterham" of Dickens's *Edwin Drood*); the fashionable osteopath (trained in Missouri); the man who has produced more portraits of the Royal family than anyone living, and makes the quaint claim that he is "an artist of near-Royal Academician standard"; the Pygmalion of the coffee bars—even if he had never become embroiled with Profumo, his would have been a curious career, and his temperament, to say nothing of his politics, is decidedly puzzling.

Fleet Street has been turning out some of its juiciest over-writing for a long, long time. There was the account of Aloysius "Lucky" Gordon's trial for assaulting Christine Keeler. "In the dock stood Gordon, whom men have called lucky . . ." and much more in the same vein. Even in responsible papers the writing has been vivid, possibly more vivid than was always intended; the *Sunday Times* ended an appeal for calm and a sense of proportion by reminding its readers that "the life of England does not flow through the loins of one red-headed girl." The same paper, along with one or two others, has tried to cut Miss Keeler down to size by referring to her sharply as "Keeler," but without much popular success; most biographers of Charles II or Nelson have yet to be persuaded that they ought to talk about "Gwyn" and "Hamilton." Meantime, the cheap Fleet Street papers (there are none cheaper) are frantically signing up the stars of the case for their memoirs, and no doubt some of the bit-players as well. There are plenty of minnows swimming around the big fish, one or two of them rather sinister, but my own favorite is quite blameless: the admirable Briscoe, the Profumos' butler, who held off a siege force of reporters and photographers by telling them that "Sir and Madam" hadn't left a forwarding address, and that Sir's parting words had been nothing more dramatic than "Cheerio, Briscoe." What a part it would have been for Eric Blore, when *The Christine Keeler Story* is filmed (as one British company threatens to do).

It is no use pretending that the first effect of the Profumo affair wasn't to rouse up the Mr. Valiant-for-Dirt in almost all of us. How could it have been otherwise? After the terrible winter, a tonic was badly needed, and here was a scandal in which the most outrageous rumors were constantly turning out to be true. One day a story would circulate which sounded as though it had been concocted by someone with nothing better to do from the more lurid pages of Magnus Hirschfeld and Krafft-Ebbing, and the next day it would be verified in cold print. There really had been a banquet waited on by a near-naked celebrity wearing a hangman's mask, and so on and so forth. Under the initial impact people were dazed and slightly delirious, but even before they sobered up and tried to see the affair in perspective, there were two serious issues which plainly called for immediate attention: security, and the circumstances surrounding Profumo's original false statement to the House of Commons. Both these matters are at present being investigated by a judge, Lord

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Denning (not without some protest from the Left—nobody doubts Denning's personal integrity, but he is very much an Establishment figure, whose brother, by chance, has been head of Naval Intelligence). I have yet to meet anyone who expects a genuine breach of security to be revealed. On the other hand, one doesn't have to be unduly timid or over-cautious to feel that there may be some disadvantages in a situation which enables a Russian agent to climb into bed just after the Secretary of State for War has climbed out. When it comes to security, Caesar's girl-friend must be above suspicion. But beyond deploring the risks involved, there isn't much that can be said. A secret service is a secret service: British Intelligence may be completely ramshackle, or it may have a series of triumphs to its credit, but in either case the public is bound to be kept in the dark.

It is more reasonable to ask for some light to be thrown on the hapless Profumo's attempt to cover up, and on the gullibility or otherwise of those who originally questioned him. Of course there was a good deal of skepticism about his statement to the House from the very beginning, and the press kept the story alive by hints and innuendoes. But a vague cynical belief during March that there was probably something in it was not necessarily a preparation for the thunderclap of early June. It was not the lie which shocked people so much as the confession. In a democracy it is as childish to assume that politicians habitually lie as that they habitually tell the truth; the fact that a Minister can be challenged in debate normally sets at least some limit to the extent to which he can deceive the public about his policies. In this case it was Profumo himself who brought the issue of honor to the forefront by making his denial in the form of a non-debatable personal statement which muzzled the Opposition. When the confession did come, the Labor party leaders, quite rightly from their point of view, at once stressed that their concern was with security, not with private morals. (Throughout the crisis, incidentally, Harold Wilson has shown himself a masterly tactician.) The moral aspect of the affair could be allowed to speak for itself: at the very least, Macmillan stood convicted of extremely poor judgment in having given Profumo one of the key posts in his government which he had then been allowed to hang on to for several years. In addition, millions of people were bound to be left with a hazy impression that after twelve years in power the Tories were turning into a bunch of playboys.

At first, therefore, the cries were less of denunciation than of dismay, while advanced opinion in the press was quick to warn against the dangers of a witch-hunt. Then, with a great clanking of character armor, the self-righteous took up their positions. Their cue came from an editorial in the *Times* entitled "It *Is* a Moral Issue." The *Times* used to be known as the Thunderer, but those italics somehow suggested a petulant squeak. There was no shortage of rumbling rhetoric in the article itself, however: the nation had been brought "psychologically and spiritually to a low ebb":

> The Conservatives came to power a few months before the present reign opened . . . They gibed at austerity, and in all truth the British people deserved some easement after their historic and heroic exertions, although history is never a nicely balanced business of rewards and penalties . . .

Indeed,

> one of the paradoxes of modern war is that defeat is more likely to restore a nation's fibre than victory. There is no hiding place from the tidal wave of overthrow and disaster. All too dangerously comfortable is the slow, insidious, almost imperceptible but inexorable ebb tide . . .

And a good deal more about affluence and fleshpots, and blood, sweat, and tears. The *Times* has an inexhaustible supply of neo-

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Elizabethan prose at its command, but it clinched its case with a quotation from the Washington *Post* about the emergence of "a picture of widespread decadence beneath the glitter of a large segment of stiff-lipped society."

For some readers this kind of editorializing was enough to make a stiff lip glitter, but for others it struck a responsive chord. Letters came pouring in, full of heartfelt thanks, headmasterly admonitions, and calls for Leadership. "Ordinary members of the public," most of them writing from what sounded like smart country-house addresses, offered their congratulations. "Many similar letters have been received," said the *Times* at the end of one batch, though it mercifully refrained from printing any more of them. At the same time, Conservative speakers began to heap reproaches on their fallen colleague and proclaim their sense of a national crisis. This phase came to a head with an extraordinary blustering performance on television by Lord Hailsham, who contrived to link Mr. Profumo's shortcomings with the Bishop of Woolwich's admiration for *Lady Chatterley's Lover,* and, while excoriating liars generally, made a seriously misleading statement about the significance of the three-line parliamentary whip in the Profumo debate. (He claimed that it was simply a summons to attend, with no bearing on how M.P.s actually chose to vote.) The reaction was sharp and immediate. The *Guardian* shuddered at the idea of England being ruled by "a new band of bigoted Cromwellian 'Saints' "; the *Economist* jibed at the *Times*'s high-flown style; the *Spectator* reminded its readers that the real national vice was "humbuggery." Lord Hailsham was violently attacked over the "three-line-whip" affair, while a Labor M.P. said in the House that "when self-indulgence has reduced a man to the shape of Lord Hailsham, sexual continence involves no more than a sense of the ridiculous." At least a dozen editorials must have invoked Pecksniff.

ALL THIS needed to be said, for there can be no doubt that England is full, if not of Cromwellian saints, at least of people itching to interfere with other people's private lives. Mandy Rice-Davies may not be everyone's cup of tea, but to any libertarian she must be less alarming than the crowd of women who waited outside court to hiss and glare at her like so many *tricoteuses.* But while I share the apprehension of writers in the *Guardian* and elsewhere about the dangers of a clean-up, I'm not sure that they haven't been exaggerating. Even in the *Times* itself there have been a fair number of letters complaining about the paper's sanctimonious tones. It is arguable, indeed, that the upsurge of righteous indignation has been less than might have been expected, and certainly less than it would have been ten or twenty years ago. The public here takes much more for granted than it did a generation back, and standards are considerably less rigid. But this is admittedly guesswork, and one important qualification must be made: the Profumo case has been very much a London affair, a West End affair in fact (as a glance at R. W. Chapin, Jr.'s splendid little map in *Time,* issue of June 28, will show). And as the political correspondent of the *Spectator* has pointed out:

> London seldom realizes how deep and wide is the gulf which separates metropolitan culture from that of most of the rest of the country, particularly the North. What is hailed with a merry guffaw in the bar of White's, or in El Vino's in Fleet Street, is greeted with outrage and shock in the New Club in Edinburgh or the Working Men's Club in Wirral. Leaving aside the question of which standard is better, this is a political fact of life . . .

A fact of life, one might add, which has certainly been grasped by that sturdy northerner, Harold Wilson, who has recently been at pains to stress the influence of both chapel and Boy Scout troop during his formative years. Yet my impression (gleaned mainly, it's true, from television and the papers) is that in the provinces,

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too, the day is past when a politician could campaign on a simple moral platform. This may be regrettable, but it doesn't argue complete decadence. Contrary to some reports, England is not yet being run by a committee composed of Messalina, Count Sacher-Masoch, and Fatty Arbuckle. Most people still have jobs to go to and rent to pay. Nor is London a latter-day Babylon. Indeed, since the wrong half of the Wolfenden Report was made law, prostitution has become more furtive than ever. The ladies who alarmed Dostoevski in the Haymarket, and accosted Edmund Wilson as he wandered down Half-Moon Street without a Baedeker, have disappeared; in their place are clip-joints selling blackcurrant cordial, and postcards in tobacconists' windows advertising Erection and Demolition Work, French Polishing, Advice on Stocks and Bonds, Advanced Spanish Lessons, and similar services. As for popular enjoyment of the Profumo spectacle, the comedians whom I saw performing "The Trial of Pristine Peeler" are the legitimate heirs of the Victorian music hall stars who sang:

Charles Dilke
Spilt the milk,
Bringing it home from Chelsea

when the Dilke divorce case cast its shadow across imperial politics eighty years ago.

Abroad, the myth of Anglo-Saxon dourness dies hard, and in the continental press the events of the past few weeks have been regarded as decidedly un-English. Profumo's Italian ancestry has been emphasized, while French journalists have spread the rumor that Christine Keeler is really a German. (She is in fact a true-born daughter of the Thames Valley; one German paper has suggested that the confusion probably arose because "like Germany, she lay between England and Russia.") Perhaps the French are reluctant to admit that we have managed, through our own unaided efforts, to produce a stink comparable with the postwar affairs of Wilma Montesi in Italy, Rosemarie Nitribitt in Germany, and the *ballets roses* in Paris; to do so would be to admit that we have at last come of age and are fit to join the Common Market. At any rate, since calls for a clean-up are frequently accompanied by xenophobia, it is probably a good thing that the foreigners in the case have tended to be marginal figures, such as Mandy Rice-Davies's original protector, Peretz Rachman, or "Polish Peter," a notorious club-owner and slum landlord in the shadier parts of Notting Hill who died a few months ago. The exception are Christine's two West Indian friends, and there has undoubtedly been a nasty streak of color prejudice in some of the reactions to the case that can be overheard in pub and launderette.

ENGLISH HIGH society has never been particularly exclusive, with the result that it is full of plutocrats who feel free to disport themselves with self-confident aristocratic abandon. London is a city where money is worshipped as shamelessly as anywhere, but can the activities of a handful of people signify much about even their own class, let alone a whole country? The hysteria generated by the Profumo case can only be fully understood if two factors in the immediate background are taken into account. One is that the past year has been rich beyond the dreams of avarice in scandals (several of them involving politicians), culminating in the Vassal case and the Duchess of Argyll's sensational divorce. The second is the cult of "satire," associated particularly with the BBC's immensely popular television program *That Was the Week That Was* and with the magazine *Private Eye,* which is supposed to have achieved a circulation of something like 80,000, even though the leading newsagents refuse to handle it. *Private Eye* is a spiteful, scurrilous, and (therefore, I'm afraid) occasionally quite funny scandal sheet, but most of its humor is simply obnoxious, at the level of C.P. Snow-has-

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only-got-one-eye-ha-ha. Apart from one or two performers, *That Was the Week* is miserable stuff, with a social conscience which, among other things, has prompted it to some mild anti-Semitism. In both cases, most of the contributors are mediocrities who have taken a hint from the altogether deserved success of *Beyond the Fringe* and the columnist Michael Frayn, and found themselves on to a good thing —but that is a subject for another day. In the meantime, the Profumo affair has been a gift to the satire trade. While the libel laws hemmed in the rest of the press after the denial in the Commons last March, *Private Eye* went ahead with its lampoons: a parody of Gibbon, for example, solemnly castigating the morals of "the consul Sextus Profanus."

Amid the wastes of pseudo-satire, the genuine article can also be seen in London this summer: the Arts Council has mounted a major exhibition of the work of George Grosz. Most visitors to the show must have been tempted to draw a few parallels between past and present, but mercifully any sustained comparison between Macmillan's easy-going Britain and the Weimar Republic would be quite meaningless. The true pictorial equivalent of the Profumo affair is not a harsh George Grosz night-piece, but, as someone has suggested, a work of pop art: a picture juxtaposing, say, a page of Hansard, a sexy poster, a miniature Union Jack, a two-way mirror, and a three-line whip. Perhaps the most striking thing about the whole business is its general shoddiness, its tinny quality. I don't think one is being merely romantic in feeling that it reflects a society which has lost its style. Compare and contrast Christine Keeler's confessions in the *News of the World* with the memoirs of her great Regency predecessor, Harriette Wilson. The *News of the World* articles were admittedly more diverting than such ghost-written jobs usually are—for five minutes at a time. Harriette Wilson's memoirs, on the other hand, are still kept fresh by her self-assured wit and piquant style. Her panache makes her much more readable than many a standard 19th-century novelist. But who could ever re-read Christine Keeler?

MR. PROFUMO'S downfall is not a suitable occasion for plunging into metaphysical gloom about the decline of the West, and sooner or later everyone will simply grow sick of talking about it. Still, the fact that so many people have been trying to treat it as a crisis of national morale is of some significance in itself. The air is heavy with what the early Victorians called the Condition-of-England question, and since the collapse of the Common Market talks, it is plain that, for the time being, any major transformations will have to be effected from within. This increases the danger of lapsing into pettiness and self-absorption, of just sitting and picking our sores. Something like the Profumo scandal *might* have broken at any time in the past, but it does seem peculiarly appropriate that it should have come near what looks like the end of a long period of Conservative rule, during a phase of political frustration and uncertainty. The Labor party has been rubbing in Britain's loss of international prestige on account of the affair, but Conservatives, too, have been depressed by the thought that the perfunctory call which Kennedy paid on Macmillan during his recent European visit was so much less important than the call he *did not* pay on de Gaulle. However, these are temporary fluctuations of fortune; if we are no longer a first-class power, it is equally illusory to suppose that we can will ourselves into becoming a third-class one. Like it or not, we have a large population, major industrial resources, and a central role in international trade. In any case, Labor is unlikely to make Britain's standing in the world a key electoral issue. Far more probably it will lay the stress on the need for efficiency—in education, housing, transport, economic planning—while assailing (with an oblique glance at the

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Profumo case) the incompetent public-schoolboy amateurism of the Tory leaders.

At present Labor seems to have the election in the bag, even if Harold Wilson, for all his skill, is not as yet a leader who inspires universal enthusiasm. But though the public opinion polls show Macmillan recovering a little of his lost popularity, from the Conservative point of view the latest by-election results have been disastrous. Macmillan survived the first moves to dethrone him because few of his critics wanted it to look as though the Prime Minister had been brought down by a call girl. Now, with the pressure to remove him still very strong, he is putting up a fight, and the fact that he is a blander and more agreeable figure than de Gaulle or Adenauer should not disguise the truth that he can be an obstinate and ruthless campaigner. It is quite possible that he will stay in office, and not utterly unthinkable that he could win another election: stranger things have happened. Still, politicians have to deal with probabilities, and most Conservatives are convinced that Macmillan's leadership would be a severe handicap at the polls. A new leader would have a year in which to establish himself with the public; Labor might make some mistakes; the economic situation could improve a good deal. Tories who reason like this are being optimistic, but if they are right, everything hinges on Macmillan being replaced, and only a crisis on the scale of the Profumo affair could have weakened his position enough to make that possible. There is still a chance that the Conservatives will look back on Christine Keeler as a blessing in disguise.

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ALFRED SHERMAN

NASSER'S DECADE

GAMAL ABDUL NASSER has now held absolute power in Egypt for over a decade. During that time his regime has settled into a regular and recognizable—if not altogether stable—pattern. It has, moreover, developed along lines broadly similar in many of the newly created nationalist states—Ghana and Indonesia, for example—and has served as an inspiration if not actually a model, to some. And while it has proved to be neither a full-blown political nor ideological system, Nasserism can no longer be viewed—as many of Nasser's critics, both in the Arab world and in the West, prefer to view it—as merely the particular reflection of a personal dictatorship.

What, then, is Nasserism and what are likely to be its long-range effects on Arab society? The now-certain failure of Nasser to realize his ambition for a centrally organized Eastern Arab federation under Egyptian hegemony, combined with the virtual disintegration of his hoped for "Casablanca bloc," provide what is perhaps the most convenient point for assessing both the phenomenon and its future. For these failures of his ambitions in foreign policy are no more fortuitous than his fantastic success in consolidating his position inside Egypt. And though Western observers have usually paid more attention to the pan-Arab aspects of Nasserism than to its domestic political content, Nasser's policies for Egypt, unlike his aims for the Arab world as a whole—which are elusive and changeable, and by no means special to him—have undergone a clear and necessary evolution and tell us a good deal about "emerging" revolutionary society.

Nasser's regime of "Arab socialism," while diverging very considerably on the theoretical plane from Communism, nevertheless bears an enormous likeness in practice to Sino-Soviet society. Thus, for example, Nasser explicitly rejects the theory of class struggle, but he has still done away with private ownership and individual enterprise in one sphere of economic and cultural activity after another. His expropriations began with foreign-owned enterprises and the large Egyptian-owned estates, moved on to indigenous non-Moslem businesses (Jewish, Christian, Greek, Syrian), and finally were extended to group after group of Moslem or Coptic Egyptians.

The purpose of these expropriations has not been to foster economic progress or efficiency (as many of Nasser's American and British apologists insist), but rather to consolidate and centralize his power—which has been further consolidated by his assumption of direct control over the communications media, culture and education, the armed forces, and religious life. Such enterprises as *Bank Misr*, for example, or the industrial empire of the Abboud brothers—spread through textiles, transport, chemicals, food packaging, engineering, and insurance—were, as Egyptian businesses, perfectly willing to cooperate with Nasser in speeding up the country's development and independence from foreign capital. But they, too, were in due course expropriated, along with publishing houses, newspapers, merchants, schools, contractors, and banks. In short, the distinctions between political and economic,

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civil and military, private and public—which are a prime feature of Western society—have eroded under Nasser in much the same way as they have in Soviet society.

The country's new ruling elite consists of its military leaders. Its second echelon of leadership is made up of junior army officers, former revolutionaries, journalists, civil servants, and those intellectuals who threw in their lot with Nasser in his early days. Next in line are schoolteachers, social workers, propagandists, land-reform administrators, and other minor officials and executives. The rest of the middle class and the intelligentsia—many of them people who had once hoped that the overthrow of Farouk would bring democracy to Egypt—co-exist with the regime as best they can. But these groups still account for only a tiny percentage of the population, the bulk of which is made up of peasants and the urban poor: workers, stall-keepers, unemployed, and hangers-on of all sorts without visible means of support. The new regime, to be sure, has involved itself far more than its predecessor in the problems of the villages and the peasantry—but with little effect. The peasants remain illiterate and as poor as they were, and local affairs are run in much the same manner as they have always been. The reforms of which the regime and its friends among the Western journalists are so proud—land-redistribution, resettlement, housing, rural cooperatives—have, according even to official statistics, affected only a small part of the population.

PART of Nasser's difficulty, not in maintaining his power—which seems assured beyond any question—but in establishing a real channel of communication between himself and the public, has been his inability to create a viable political party to represent the regime. His opposition, both actual and potential, has been thoroughly atomized; but on the other side, there is no organizational structure to rouse or mobilize grass-roots support: no party, that is, like the Republican party in Turkey before 1946, the Algerian F.L.N., Bourghiba's Constitutional party in Tunisia, or Nkhrumah's NCPP.

So far three attempts have been made to create a "Nasserist" party. The first was in 1953, when in cooperation with a group of former radical nationalist politicians, Nasser established the "Liberation Rally." Liberation Rally boasted a large membership and branches throughout the country, but it never gained its own momentum, and it had long since ceased to carry public weight by the time it was officially dissolved in 1958. Meanwhile, the "constitution" of 1956 had endorsed the formation of a "National Union" to realize the objectives for which the Revolution was started, and to concentrate efforts to build a sound political, social, and economic foundation for the country. But the N.U., too, was slow in getting started—and then short-lived. Early in 1958, Nasser set up its Supreme Committee, and in mid-1959—after Syria's accession to the U.A.R.—elections were held in both the Northern (Syrian) and Southern (Egyptian) regions. Finally, in 1961, following the break-up with Syria, Nasser dissolved the N.U. on the ground that it had been infiltrated by selfish people and other unsocialist elements.

The most recent attempt to create a Nasserist party was made in 1962, with the formation of a new organization, the "National Congress of Popular Forces," which was to take over the functions of the defunct Liberation Rally plus some supervisory duties in the economy and a role in the surrounding Arab world. What the actual relation of the Congress to the state bureacracy is, however, does not yet seem to have been worked out in detail, and there is no evidence that it is any more vital or active than its two predecessors.

The ever increasing concentration of economic, political, and cultural power in the hands of the central government has served to intensify the traditional helplessness of the individual *vis-à-vis* the state—that helplessness which has always been the curse of Egyptian life. So long as the presence of Nasser himself can protect the over-all social and political structure from any really serious shock, therefore, Egyptian stability can be taken for granted. The fact that there is no political machinery for determining the succession does not in itself constitute an immediate problem. On the other hand, the regime's economic shakiness and its depen-

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dence on foreign aid do make it vulnerable. Nasser has failed to expand production of food and consumer goods. Not only is the *fellah* as badly off as ever, but the country's textile industry—so basic to the economy—must depend on American aid for its supplies of raw cotton, since nearly the whole of the local cotton crop is mortgaged to the Soviet bloc in payment for arms and other imports. If American aid, now approaching $500 million a year, were for any reason to be cut off suddenly, the result would be mass unemployment and a serious shortage of food. Under circumstances like these, the absence of a loyal party to back up the regime's military and administrative operations could become a very grave matter—if not, indeed, a decisive one.

NASSER'S FAILURE to surround his own power with an effective party also contributes to his inability to realize the dream of a united Arab world. This question, the problem of pan-Arabism, is for the most part improperly understood in the West. It is neither true that the only obstacles to Arab unity are retrograde feudal rulers and foreign interference, nor that the whole business is merely a political gimmick of Nasser's. Pan-Arabism—the belief that all Arab-speaking communities constitute a single nation—is, to be sure, of recent origin. It came to birth in the Levant at the turn of the century but did not take hold in Egypt until the late 1930's. Before then, Egyptian sympathies and aspirations had tended to run North-to-South (from Europe and the Mediterranean, and toward the upper Nile valley) while longings for an East-to-West Arab axis were suspected of being the expression of a reactionary clerical medievalism. The pioneer pan-Arabist in Egypt was none other than King Farouk, who dreamed of a restored Arab Caliphate—with himself as the first incumbent. Farouk was not devout, nor was his proposal ever precisely worked out; it was generally assumed, therefore, that he was chiefly interested in enhancing his prestige among traditionally minded Egyptians and counteracting the mass political appeal of the nationalists. Farouk's tactics were largely those used subsequently by Nasser: namely, to aggravate both anti-Western feelings and dissatisfaction with local dynasties in countries like the Sudan, Libya, Trans-Jordan, and Iraq through the agency of Egyptian teachers sent into other Arab countries, local nationalists, or students in Egypt returning home. It was Farouk's men who financed Col. Tal's assassination of Jordan's King Abdulla in 1951. And it was under Farouk, too, that Cairo's inflammatory broadcasts to the rest of the Arab world were initiated.

Yet Farouk's pan-Arabism misfired. His attempt to play a larger part than Egypt could manage in the Palestine War of 1948 brought about, or at least hastened, his overthrow. At first, the new revolutionary regime shunned pan-Arabism, returning to modern Egypt's traditional North-South preoccupations, and it was not until Nasser's original hopes for the quick reform and rehabilitation of Egyptian society had been crushed that he took up pan-Arabism seriously.

Pan-Arabism had much to offer Nasser. For one thing, it made an exciting slogan for the Egyptians; for another, it held out the promise of new political and military strength. Arab unification could help solve Egypt's economic problems, both by providing additional resources and by increasing Nasser's international nuisance value. And it could also bring him within striking distance of a second round against Israel, thereby buttressing his claim to be the true successor to Saladin. Yet despite the high prestige Egypt has always enjoyed in the Arab world, despite the instability of some of the existing regimes in that world, and despite the universal popularity of the notion of Arab-Moslem unity and solidarity, Nasser has hardly come any closer to realizing this ambition than Farouk did. Time and time again he has seemed to be on the point of success, only to fail in the end. Apart from a none too secure foothold in the Yemen, he is faced with an Arab world whose members are either avowedly hostile or pay lip service to solidarity while keeping him well at arm's length.

THERE ARE a number of good reasons for Nasser's failure here. First, though Arab societies have much in common with one another, many things besides their separate political histories divide them. Ethnic and linguistic differences, for instance, are very

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real (in Iraq, the Kurdish minority fears being completely swamped by a pan-Arab state, as does the Christian majority in Lebanon). In some Arab countries, too, dynastic and theocratic traditions remain vital. The fact is, the very term "Arab unity" means different things in different countries, and rarely does it carry Nasser's radical connotation. Even those of his Arab neighbors who admire Nasser are chary of becoming mere provinces of the Cairene metropolis and of sharing their countries' resources with twenty-seven million Egyptians, most of whom have a lower standard of living than is generally prevalent in the Arab world. Moreover, many people who favor unity in theory are opposed to the totalitarianism of Nasser's regime.

A case in point is the history of Nasser's relations with the Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection Party). Like Nasser, the Baath is anti-imperialist and supports unity, socialism, and Afro-Asian solidarity. At one time or another the party has been highly influential in Syria, the Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq. Yet within a year of Syrian-Egyptian unification in 1958—and despite the fact that its members were being persecuted by Kassem in Iraq and Hussein in Jordan for being pro-Nasser—Baath was ousted from power and eventually banned. Today in Syria and Iraq it constitutes the single most important obstacle to effective union with Egypt, although its leaders still wish to collaborate with Nasser against Israel (the Baath is strongly in favor of armed invasion), Communist infiltration, and Western influence. The reason for the head-on clash between Nasser and the Baath is quite simply that he can neither agree to its separate existence nor allow it the special position in the Arab world that it claims for itself.

It would appear that Nasser's passion for unifying the Arabs has intensified as the possibility of his doing so has receded. In the early 50's he enjoyed the advantage of being the first Arab ruler to make use of the paraphernalia of a dynamic modern dictatorship, combining revolutionary nationalism with Moslem xenophobia, playing on a cult of personality, and employing such devices as radio propaganda and underground activity. He was the only Arab leader with any real standing outside his own country, accepted by like-minded Afro-Asians, approved of by the Communist world, feared by the West. But by 1960, many other Arab leaders had caught up: Kassem, King Muhammed of Morocco (and later his son Hassan), Bourguiba. The Sudan had its own military dictatorship modeled on Nasser's, but with the primary purpose of keeping the country out of Egyptian hands. And every Arab state now had powerful new transmitters and teams of radio-warriors.

In addition to all this, the dissolution of the union with Syria in 1961 was (and remains) an enormous set-back for Nasser. Yet defeat has only made him all the more intransigent. During the months following the Syrian secession he enunciated his theses on "Arab Socialism," which proposed Egypt as the "nucleus of liberty, unity and socialism of the whole Arab Nation." Egypt's duty, his argument ran, was to act as the spearhead of the Arab drive for unity, and as such, she was not obligated to "recognize outworn arguments about interference in the affairs of other Arab governments."

IN THE EARLY 50's, too, it seemed that the "Palestine question"—that is, the question of how to overrun Israel and replace it with an Arab Palestine—would by itself aid enormously in unifying the Arabs, while also serving Nasser as a magical stick with which to beat all opponents. But even here things have failed to work out as expected. To be sure, Nasser has no difficulty whatever in whipping up the denizens of the refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria; and he can always count on the support of former Palestinians now living in Jordan. But this agitation has only resulted in determination by the Jordanian government to "integrate" the refugees into the national life as soon as possible in order to pacify them (the word "re-settlement" is taboo). Nasser's propagandists accuse his rivals of being "soft on Zionism"—but by now they have learned to pay him back in the same coin and to attack him in turn for allowing the United Nations Emergency Force to remain along his borders with Israel and for not closing the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping (which he could not do without risking an armed clash). Nasser's plan to create a "Palestine Entity" in Western Jordan, whose

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army would be under his control and which could serve as the springboard for an eventual attack on Israel, has been successfully resisted by Jordan, with the backing of the other Arab states. An attack on Israel must, for purely strategic reasons, await the achievement of a high degree of Arab unity, which would make it possible to set up a joint command and to deploy troops where they are most needed (i.e., Iraqui and Egyptian troops in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon along Israel's exposed borders).

Since such a high degree of unity is at the moment politically unattainable, Nasser has been forced back to the idea of using an Egyptian attack on Israel as a lever for dominating the Eastern Arab world. But given the present state of the Egyptian economy, the level of health and education, and the psychology of the people, Nasser would have to wait a long time before he could create a land army to match Israel's. His only hope against Israel, therefore, lies in some sort of technical breakthrough—missiles, or bacteriological, chemical, or atomic weapons—that would enable him to launch a sudden and unanswerable attack. This is what accounts for his recent employment of German and Austrian scientists.

Most of the experts agree that even with the aid of these scientists, it will take a fairly long time for Nasser to develop weapons of mass destruction. But if and when he should acquire even something so modest as ground-to-ground missiles with conventional warheads, Israel will be faced with the necessity for an agonizing strategic reappraisal. So long as Nasser threatens only with land forces backed by naval and air support, Israel can depend on her capacity for defense and counter-attack. But at present there is still no defense against missile warfare, only a choice between deterrence and a pre-emptive strike. And considering Nasser's previously demonstrated attitude toward the cost of military adventures, the Israelis cannot be expected to place too much faith in deterrence. It stands to reason, therefore, that if Nasser's first-strike capacity, in whatever form, comes near to being operational, the Israelis will be obliged to weigh the pros and cons of a pre-emptive attack. This decision, however, may not have to be made for several years, and in the meantime Nasser's main entanglements are likely to be with his Arab neighbors. So far as Israel is concerned, these entanglements are both an advantage and a curse, for while inter-Arab feuding mitigates the danger to her from Arab hostility, it also prevents the working out of an accommodation with Nasser.

WHERE FAROUK tried to call in the Arab world to redress the political balance inside Egypt, Nasser has gone further by trying to build and lead an effective Afro-Asian bloc to enhance his prestige at home and in the Arab world and to increase his bargaining power with both East and West. Thus far the attempt has been no more successful than his efforts toward Arab unity. The "Casablanca group," originally meant to be an all-African organization, never grew beyond its original six members (Egypt, the then provisional Algerian government, Morocco, Mali, Ghana, Guinea), and has largely disintegrated. Whenever he engaged in a direct conflict with the West, Nasser could be sure of solid Afro-Asian support—as, indeed, any Afro-Asian nationalist government could. But this solidarity has dissolved whenever he has tried to exploit it for the purpose of extending Egyptian hegemony, or of furthering the interests of the Soviet bloc as part of his bargains with Moscow. When, for example, the Soviet bloc attempted to make a comeback in the Congo through their stooge Gizenga, Nasser backed them to the hilt, withdrawing his forces from the U.N. command, extending to Gizenga both military and political aid, and lining up the Egyptian propaganda and diplomatic machinery behind the Soviet position. But the Afro-Asians, particularly the Africans, rebuffed him, and the Sudanese closed their frontiers to supplies of aircraft and personnel. In the end, he had to come to heel and accept the Adoula government.

Another example is the fate of the "Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Congress," set up jointly by Nasser and the Russians during their first honeymoon in the mid-50's. Only the more militantly "positive neutralist" governments gave it even nominal support, and the remaining Afro-Asian countries turned a cold shoulder. It has failed to exert any effective pressure on non-member gov-

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ernments, and, weakened by quarrels among its members, has ceased to be taken seriously, even by its sponsors.

Nor has Nasser fared any better in mustering Afro-Asian support for use in his inter-Arab disputes or in his quarrel with Israel. Groups in which Communist or extreme "positive neutralist" influence is dominant, like the Casablanca group in its heyday, will back him, but wherever he has been involved with a broader spectrum of countries—such as he was at the 1961 Belgrade Conference or the recent African Conference in Addis Ababa—his campaigns against Israel and his Arab rivals have invariably been stopped short.

NASSER'S relations with the West on one side and the Communist bloc on the other are marked by similar complications. His periodic assertions that he regards the Communist world as essentially friendly, and the Western world as unreliable if not hostile, are perfectly sincere. He and his generation grew up in a time and place dominated by the British and French empires; their political thinking still centers on a simple anti-colonialism—that is to say, anti-Europeanism. Added to this is the age-old hostility of the Moslem for the Christian West, which Nasser has been able to exploit in the interests of his own popularity. The West, moreover, seems likely to continue with a more or less benevolent attitude toward Israel, whereas the Soviet bloc follows a line of pure expediency on this question. The result is that for the past decade Egyptian and Soviet policies have moved in broadly parallel directions and any friction that has chanced to arise has been fairly easily ironed out.

As far as ideology per se is concerned, however, Western influence is still far greater among the Arabs than is that of Communism —thanks to all those decades of Western-controlled education, to the attraction of Western universities, the influx of Western publications, and the special role of the French and English languages. The Arab Communist parties, by contrast, have not made a very impressive showing. The prominence of the Communists in Iraq, where they managed to batten on the Kassem-Nasser feud for a while, seems to have been a flash in the pan, and Kassem had broken their back long before he himself was overthrown. Moscow has come to understand this apparent paradox and to accept with equanimity the persecution of Arab Communists by governments with which the Soviet regime wishes to remain on good terms, including Nasser's. There is, to be sure, a sharp contradiction between Moscow's claim to universal leadership of progressive mankind and its de facto cooperation with "national-bourgeois" regimes, but we have no reason to doubt Nasser's repeated assurances that this contradiction casts no present shadow over Soviet-Egyptian relations.

Khrushchev, however, has carefully abstained from anything that might be interpreted as approval of pan-Arabism in general or of Nasser's own striving for hegemony in particular. Even in the case of regimes which are anathema to Moscow, like the Jordanian, Libyan, and Saudi Arabian, Soviet propaganda pointedly refrains from questioning their right to separate statehood. This question could conceivably become an Egyptian-Soviet bargaining counter, but since there is little if anything that Russia could effectually do to help Nasser in his drive for hegemony over the Arab world, neither side has raised the issue. At one time Nasser, like Tito, made great play in his propaganda of being able to lead sections of the Arab and Afro-Asian world in the Soviet direction. In practice, though, this has come to mean little. The real motive for Soviet aid and comfort to Nasser is, as it has always been, his role as a major threat to the West's position in the Middle East, and not the hope that he will become an ideological ally.

American policy toward Nasser is much less straightforward; indeed, from the point of view of logic, it seems to make no sense, swinging back and forth as it has from extremes of generosity to extremes of hostility. In 1956, for example, within the space of one year, Dulles suddenly withdrew the promise of American aid for the Aswan Dam, then vigorously supported Egypt against the Anglo-French-Israeli attack, and then once again embarrassed Nasser by enunciating the "Eisenhower Doctrine." State Department policy nowadays is predicated on the idea that by massive aid Nasser can be weaned away from his de-

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pendence on the Soviet bloc and brought to concentrate on the economic and social development of his country. In answer to any marshaling of evidence that this policy has not changed Nasser's behavior in the least, Washington offers the assurance that though Nasser has his faults like everyone else, he will come around if enough patience is shown.

SUMMING UP, then, we can see that after ten years of rule Nasser has at least one thing in common with Farouk: he too has chosen to stake his political appeal primarily on pan-Arabism and has met with a series of crushing setbacks. Nor have his domestic achievements been of an order to compensate for such defeats—particularly the critical recent breakdowns in negotiations over federation with Iraq and Syria. The economy, overstrained with development projects—some legitimate, others not—record military expenditures, and the vast administrative overhead inevitable in a regime like Nasser's, annually becomes more dependent on foreign aid. The only thing to prevent the Western powers from applying the economic sanctions that would necessarily bring Nasser to heel is their fear that his downfall would open the way for a Communist takeover. Yet if there is today a real danger of Communism in Egypt—whereas such a danger was negligible in 1952—Nasser himself bears the largest burden of blame: it was he who made modern totalitarianism fashionable in the Middle East and who in large measure abetted the Soviet political breakthrough into Africa.

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES

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OBSERVATIONS

On Paul Goodman

GEORGE STEINER

I HAVE only once had the privilege of meeting Paul Goodman. I stress "privilege." There is no one whose encounter flatters in a more exacting way. He has no small talk, only an immediacy of intense purpose. His chosen art is discourse—in the old sense of dialogue ferreting truth by bound and rebound, by unembarrassed exchange of intimate vehemence. To use that fine twist of phrase in *Coriolanus*: he does not "coy a man." The hands are notable: they contour thought and the living, fluid shape of argument as if it were pottery. The forward hunch, the literal pressing home of an idea, suggest an artisan involved in the recoil or yielding of a tangible medium. We spoke till two in the morning, in the apartment of mutual acquaintances in the Village. The floor pulsed at regular intervals as the laundromat downstairs started up; the note of haste and cleansing was exactly right. I have known many such nights at the University of Chicago, in its former days, and in Eastern Europe, when the edge of a word or thought prickles the skin. They are not as frequent in America as they might be.

That, of course, is Goodman's point. He is trying to restore to a society gone violent or indifferent (and the violence is bred of the uncaring) a sense of live, exploring debate. Between the closing walls of technological determinism and political cliché, he is trying to hack out elbow room for the imagination. The novels, the poems, the polemics, the tough-minded reveries of the utopian, spring from an axiom of hope: from the assertion that the imperatives of our social and political condition are only apparent, that they do not enshrine the only possibility. "People are so bemused by the way business and politics are carried on at present, with all their intricate relationships, that they have ceased to be able to imagine alternatives. We seem to have lost our genius for inventing changes to satisfy crying needs. . . . And when one cannot think of anything to do, soon one ceases to think at all." Against the unexamined crassness of habitual politics, against the cynicism which grows from impotence, Goodman declares the shaping power of individual contrivance.

The fantastic thing is that Goliath has noticed. Roughly, Goodman's career falls into three periods: a stage of intellectually brilliant, but not unconventional radicalism in the 1930's, culminating in his novel, *The Empire City* (1942); a fairly long eclipse, during which his work was known to a small circle of passionate admirers, and legend had it that forty manuscripts lay unpublished in a trunk; and the breakthrough, after *Growing Up Absurd* in 1960, and the re-issue of *Communitas* (written in collaboration with his brother Percival). The years out of the light seem to have stored in Goodman an explosive impetus and sense of urgency. Since *Growing Up Absurd,* he has produced, in rapid sequence, *Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals* (at least one of which dates back to 1950), *The Community of Scholars, Drawing the Line* (an updated version of a war-time pamphlet), and *The Society I Live in is Mine* (a collection of his letters to newspapers and magazines). A new novel is imminent. Today, Goodman matters.

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FIRST, to those he is attacking, to those who represent the indiscriminate economic weight and power-hypocrisies of our society. When Goodman paraded in front of Random House in support of a general peace strike, Bennett Cerf sent out a cup of hot coffee. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. has taken time off from his Goncourt journal of the Kennedy era to announce that Paul Goodman is a kind of licensed court jester to the true, sane liberalism of the administration. They do *read* him up there. But it is to the young that he is really important. In the past three years, Goodman has lectured at fifty colleges and universities. There is hardly a week when he is not speaking *somewhere,* to a student audience, to a parents' association, to a gathering of social workers or teachers stupefied by the waste and absurdities of the system.

The Socratic gesture was limited to a small city, to a *polis* in which a man's voice could span the market place. Goodman has shown that a single person, backed by the pressure of vision and immune to embarrassment, can still initiate and sustain dialogue amid the chaotic loudness of a mass society. That alone is a formidable achievement, and an argument to show that democracy by free contention makes sense. One recalls Hazlitt's tribute to Cobbett: "He is too much for any single newspaper antagonist, 'lays waste' a city orator or Member of Parliament, and bears hard upon the Government itself. He is a kind of *fourth estate* in the politics of the country."

Abroad also. Though it was savaged by English reviewers, *Growing Up Absurd* has had its impact. Goodman's is about the only American voice that young English pacifists and nuclear disarmers find convincing. Part of the reason I was approached to be senior member of the Cambridge anarchists was the rumor that I had met Goodman. The polish of some of the members and their recruitment from the most regal of Cambridge colleges struck me as odd. But that was bad history; for the source of modern anarchist doctrine is a prince.

Kropotkin's *Memoirs* remains the best gloss on philosophic anarchism, on the reflexes of anger and hope which inspire Goodman. Each anarchist makes for himself the discovery reported by Kropotkin after his voyage to Siberia:

> I had ample opportunities to watch the ways and habits of the peasants in their daily life, and still more opportunities to appreciate how little the state administration could give to them, even if it was animated by the very best intentions. My extensive journeys . . . taught me how little man really needs as soon as he comes out of the enchanted circle of conventional civilization. With a few pounds of bread and a few ounces of tea in a leather bag, a kettle and a hatchet hanging at the side of the saddle, and under the saddle a blanket . . . a man feels wonderfully independent.

He is ready for what Goodman would call "the primary experiences" of sensuous autonomy and personal encounter. In the rat-maze of urban technology, life is as stale as the fumes we breathe; our very emotions, the words we babble in the privacy of lust or fear, tend to be secondhand.

To the legacy of Thoreau, Kropotkin, and Tolstoy, the balance of nuclear terror has added a new relevance. The facts of 20th-century history (in which some 70 million people were wiped out in Europe and Russia by war, deportation, or famine) suggest that the link between war and the nation-state is not accidental. The traditional anarchist critique was directed against the waste and oppressions of centralized government. The new anarchism focuses on the catastrophic failure of sovereign states to co-exist in peace, to grant their citizens a full span or expectation of survival. In the modern nation, armed to the teeth, citizenship has become a compact with Mars.

Goodman has seized on the cardinal error in Marxist prophecy—Marx's failure to anticipate the tremendous, blind force of modern nationalism. In defining the young as a class which transcends national barriers, in trying to marshal in the young a common dread of war, a common revulsion against the power slogans and strategic frivolities of the old, the anarchists and peace movements are attempting to correct and redefine the Marxist image of international proletarian solidarity. Youth of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your lives.

In Goodman's perspective, there is not much to choose between Russia and

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America. The sheer dimension of the military establishment and the calculated political investment in fear, create comparable distortions and restrictions of the human possibility:

> The very futility of the States . . . commits them rigidly to the Cold War. Without it, it is doubtful if the great sovereignties could survive with anything like their present personnel, vested interests, motivations and ideology. Their one function seems to be to continue a clinch and hinder the evolution of the world community. And, of course, domestic and economic policy are swallowed up by the Cold War. Twenty per cent of the gross national product is devoted more or less directly to armament, and we are drifting rapidly forward into a fascism-by-consent. The case is not different in Russia, except that Russia can afford it less.

If I understand Goodman rightly, he believes that a nuclear war is, in fact, very probable, that the equal hypocrisy displayed by both sides in the disarmament talks and the dissemination of nuclear weapons in NATO (with German participation) mark a point of no return. Why, then, should a man labor to mend the injustice or ugliness of his community? How does the expectation of political disaster relate to Goodman's untiring call for practical, local reform?

THIS IS the decisive and original point in his anarchist faith. First there is an aesthetic of personal gesture: "to make positive decisions for one's community, rather than being regimented by others' decisions, is one of the noble acts of man." Unlike Tolstoy and the quietist wing of anarchism, Goodman is prepared to work with the available mechanism of social action, even where it is corrupt or sordid. He does not abdicate, but seeks to subvert creatively. He is, principally, a builder, and the ruling metaphor is always one of construction (*edify* means both to build and to educate).

But more urgently: the one chance there is of averting nuclear catastrophe lies in restoring to peace the dynamics of feeling, the imaginative scope, and sacrificial impulse which nation-states are able to summon in war. The logic of war—the obscure but radical spasm of psychological elation when the horror comes—springs directly from the frustrations, ungoverned complexities, and boredom of life in the technological warren. The central assertion is made in *Communitas*: "The future is gloomy, and we offer you a book about the bright face of the future! It is because we have a stubborn faith in the following proposition: the chief, the underlying reason that people wage war is that they do not wage peace. How to wage peace?"

Goodman's present work—on a New York school board, in the study of delinquency and urban renewal, in the University Seminar on Problems of Interpretation at Columbia, in group therapy—is an attempt to spell out the answer. His genius as a publicist ("I am a man of letters in the old sense, one who thinks that the literary process itself, the criticism of life, adds a new and indispensable element") has made the major lines of his argument familiar:

> The multiplication of commodities and the false standard of living, on the one hand, the complication of the economic and technical structure in which one can work at a job, on the other hand, and the lack of direct relationship between these two have by now made a great part of external life morally meaningless.

If we are to survive, we must devise and articulate the pattern of a world so meaningful to human impulse and creativity that men will *want* to live in it; that they will find in it demand and use for those energies previously frustrated or released in the explosive ruin of battle. We must, in Lenin's phrase, be taught "to dream forward." Nationalism, economic greed, and the recoil of the individual mind from the fantastic difficulty of the issues posed—the profound, tired instinct to leave it to *them* to decide—have made the modern world a place formidably well equipped to die in. Goodman asks: can it be made a place to live in?

There is so little room left for maneuver, the line of nuclear terror is so fine-drawn, that the original anarchist vision of large-scale upheaval is no longer possible. Bakunin is obsolete. Hence Goodman's insistence on the "small step," on the local device: "a tendency to look always for large-scale solutions to our multifarious problems . . . is the very attitude that, in my opinion,

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causes our troubles. It is the way of liberals to try to solve a problem by pasting it on the wall and throwing a lot of money at it. But very many stubborn and terrible problems can be solved only by particular and tailor-made application to themselves. Every settlement house knows this; the attempt to centralize such houses . . . is ruinous. It leads to dilution and irrelevance."

Goodman then puts his finger on the flagrant myth of "large-scale, massive support" as an efficient means in research or the life of art. Every academic is familiar with the paradox that it is easier to raise half a million dollars toward a bogus research project (often dreamed up primarily because there are funds to be drawn in) than to find ten thousand toward the translation of a vitally needed text or half a year off for a scholar working alone. Large sums indiscriminately bestowed do not necessarily spur; they can choke. Example: an eastern university not long ago received $35 million to foster the study of international relations (whether such study, in fact, exists in any serious intellectual or scholastic sense is by no means obvious). The more thoughtful members of the university soon realized that such an amount was an indigestible absurdity; but refusal, or a request that it be drastically reduced, is hardly conceivable in the present mores of academic prestige. What can one do with that kind of money? Move old buildings and design new ones. (A few blocks from the campus, Negroes live in a semi-slum where rat-bite is not infrequent.) And far more is involved here than a matter of fiscal technique. As Goodman points out, there are grave problems which can only be treated by exact, modest means, by the scrupulous generosity of the imagination when it is dealing with a single human person or local fabric. Large figures blur their own intent; art and love deal in the singular.

In his sense of due measure, Goodman is deeply Aristotelian (as were Hegel and the young Marx). His touchstone is "the human scale," the application of the measure of man to our needs and surroundings. Technologies must be selected according to criteria of utility, comprehensibility, repairability, flexibility of use, amenity and modesty of design. Goodman proposes to ban cars from the streets of Manhattan, not only to purge the fouled air and restore fluidity of human motion, but to goad the imagination out of acquiescence, to make it aware of "ideal solutions, human values, and new ways to do basic things." To walk from one place on a map to another—not as a cold war show of national virility—but in sheer utility or pleasure, mends something of the ancient, vital links broken between man and the place of his dwelling.

He urges that we create small colleges in which the process of intellectual exchange would be freed from all but a minimum of administrative or extra-curricular demands. That architects commissioned to build schools be allowed to confer with the teachers who will be using the building (in Manhattan and the Bronx, at least, the Goodman brothers appear to have won on this seemingly obvious point). That we turn to leisure rather than to drugs for our tranquillity. That our places of work be within natural, pertinent reach of our homes (it does *not* make sense for a man to spend three hours of his day commuting in dirty trains in order to keep his family out of a city to which he is contributing his life's work). That parks and open spaces are not an end in themselves, but must be kept safe and made accessible to those who need them. That schoolteachers should not be burdened with pseudo-sociological controls over the manner and substance of their teaching, or dismissed for refusing to participate in four civil-defense drills a week.

PRECISE hurts; detailed, concrete remedies. A picture of man at home in the world, rather than as a harassed guest. Above all, a plea for the logic of sensuous needs. (Goodman's nightmares have a way of becoming the real thing: there is a new office building in New York with no windows whatever; the human beings who work in it presumably receive news of the weather between gusts of Muzak.) And time is running out. If we rebel at Goodman's prodding, at the impatient arrogance of his compassion, he directs us to the evidence: to the statistics on alcoholism, drug-addiction, and mental illness in our cities; to Michael Harrington's careful estimate that nearly a third of the population lives in substandard conditions; to the ubiquity of violence and boredom; to the nearness of

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major racial conflict or international crisis. Goodman is an angry man:

> We spend our money for follies, our leisure does not revive us, our conditions of work are unmanly and our beautiful American classlessness is degenerating into a static bureaucracy; our mass arts are beneath contempt; our prosperity breeds insecurity; our system of distribution has become huckstering and our system of production discourages enterprise and sabotages invention.

But anger is not despair; and suddenly we hear the buoyant, Jeffersonian note: "if ten thousand people in all walks of life will stand up on their two feet and talk out and insist, we shall get back our country."

* * *

THIS IS, I believe, a fair statement of Goodman's positive regional anarchism. It is the redoubt from which he organizes his forays. Against censorship, whether it be the hounding of Pasternak in Russia, of O'Casey in Dublin, or merely the habit of the New York *Times* not to print letters that are genuinely controversial or radical in tone. Against the window-dressing culture staged in the Kennedy White House ("His musicale has been praised by Paul Henry Lang who was so brutal to Ike"). From this Jeffersonian anarchism derive the pragmatic blueprints and repair-jobs (the manual bias of Goodman's intelligence, his sly carpenter's wit, show beautifully in the paper on "Seating Arrangements" in *Utopian Essays*).

But a major component is missing, without which his position is inaccurately presented. He regards the health of society as indivisible from the mental state and psychopathology of the individual. In his writings, metaphors of neurosis, transfer, repression, and *Gestalt* inevitably relate the domain of psychiatric therapy to that of political action. He has linked doctrines of anarchism, non-violence, and decentralization derived from Kropotkin, Gandhi, and Jefferson, to the heritage of Freud and, more specifically, of Wilhelm Reich. It is from Reich that he adapts the concept of a "sexual revolution" and the implicit analogy (probably it is more than that) between social liberation and erotic release.

Goodman refers himself to Milton, "the last Englishman, the last who insisted on keeping all the parts together, freedom and power, sexuality and adulthood, poetry and citizenship." But whereas the mythology of Milton is doctrinal, that of Goodman is essentially psychoanalytic. "We must forthrightly carry through the sexual revolution, encourage the sexuality of children and adolescents, get rid of the sex laws and other moral laws." But not, as Milton or Tolstoy would have it, in order to blunt the edge of sexual need and malaise in our lives, but to give the libido larger, freer compass. How is this to be achieved in a society afflicted simultaneously by a Puritan hang-over and a blatant commercial use of erotic suggestions?

One gets the impression that Goodman would wish to extend the benefits of individual analysis or group psychotherapy to a large part of the population. "I want to transform the physical training and play periods in the public schools to the principles of character analysis and eurhythmics." Adult conflicts and social neuroses would be acted out and explored in sessions of *Gestalt* therapy (with plenty of fresh air and handicrafts in the interval). The image is that of a Platonic state with the psychiatrist as Guardian. Indeed, there are hints in Goodman's work and personal pronouncements that those who have not undergone analysis are somehow diminished or suspect.

I am not qualified to judge the technical aspects of the argument, and it may well be that Goodman envisages a transitional period of wide-scale social therapy before the new Communitas can be realized (this would correspond to the Marxist pattern of coercion and mixed social modes before the classless state). But it is here that the parochial, limiting nature of his involvement with certain specific segments of American experience, and particularly New York-Jewish experience, tells. In Europe, where social modes are more stable, and personal lives have been long exposed to public, political tragedy, psychotherapy and communal interest in private neurosis play a far smaller role. Psychoanalysis has been recognized for what it often is: the pathos of the leisured. Goodman reflects a milieu in which the conventions and jargon of the analytic situation are commonplace. In projecting this atmosphere to the general human possibility, he seems naïve

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and self-defeating. For it is difficult to see how some of the virtues he sets highest—the habit of private, solitary adventure, the eccentricity and complication of the single person, the restoration of concreteness and immediacy to our speech—will survive the erosive clichés of psychotherapy. Being himself brilliantly articulate and unembarrassed, Goodman shows little awareness of the healing energies of self-irony and silence (that, perhaps, is why his poems and his book on Kafka are so weak).

Because it is no more than a functional shorthand, the psychoanalytic mythology of consciousness and behavior grossly oversimplifies. And this oversimplification often penetrates Goodman's thought. Though calling for modest, exact perception of the individual case, he will drift, nearly unaware, into massive generalization. He has implied that racial conflicts and deep-rooted historical prejudice are simply neuroses, calling for therapeutic treatment (compared with the work done on mass-hatreds and social hysteria by Hermann Broch and Canetti, Goodman's analysis is impatient journalism). He will often assume that dilemmas are complicated or cruel only because no one has tried a common-sense solution, that *they*—the men in power—are simply knaves and fools. Commenting on the Meredith case, Goodman writes: "Kennedy did not use his moral authority; he did not go to Oxford, take Meredith by the hand, and into the school. If he had then been hit by a bottle—he might well have—there would have been a great change in the southern liberals. The sane would have ceased cowering." The wobbly syntax (who is *he*, Meredith or the President?) alerts to the general simplification. Would there have been a great change or a yawp of derision? And note the automatic equation between "sane" and "liberal." To regard all segregationists as insane may make one feel better; it renders their vile conviction more tolerable to the liberal imagination. But is it a useful or responsible basis for political action?

When Goodman's prose works, it has the helpful impatience of a good machinist's manual. But often it is careless and woolly (again one thinks of Hazlitt on Cobbett: "One has no notion of him as making use of a fine pen"). The point is not trivial. When they are set down grossly, with little attention to the resources and complexities of the medium, ideas emerge as simpler—and that often means as less exciting and less true—than they are. Unlike Ruskin, who worked along similar lines of criticism and utopia, Goodman has not given his proposals the untimeliness of beauty.

He is too honest not to know that. He reports of himself that he aimed to be a playwright, novelist, and poet. But the hour is late and too many urgent jobs need doing: "I must write, freely, the kind of poems and stories that belong to a person who dutifully takes on these other responsibilities of citizenship. Yet the task is too much for me." Both the moral choice and the statement of defeat are deeply Jewish. But as one looks at the prodigious amount of work done, there is no sense of failure; only the exhilarating sight of a man fighting windmills which have, in fact, turned out to be Philistine giants. Mr. Goodman is a *mensch*. The species is getting rare.

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NORMAN MAILER

Responses & Reactions V

This is the fifth in a series of commentaries by the distinguished novelist NORMAN MAILER *on selections from Martin Buber's* Tales of the Hasidim (*Schocken Books*).

The Fear of God

Once Zusya prayed to God: "Lord, I love you so much, but I do not fear you enough! Lord, I love you so much, but I do not fear you enough! Let me stand in awe of you like your angels, who are penetrated by your awe-inspiring name." And God heard his prayer, and his name penetrated the hidden heart of Zusya as it does those of the angels. But Zusya crawled under the bed like a little dog, and animal fear shook him until he howled: "Lord, let me love you like Zusya again!" And God heard him this time also.

There is an existential logic in this story which leads to a root in the meaning of miracles. Zusya is ambitious, he is intellectually ambitious, he wishes to feel a fear of God because he is secretly confident he will be able to withstand that fear and so acquire more knowledge of the universe, more revelation of the secrets of God and Nature. The request is Faustian. Yet God in revealing Himself further to Zusya terrifies him profoundly. Why? Does He terrify Zusya because He is Jehovah, a God of wrath and rectitude, an essentialist's God? Or is the fear which comes over Zusya a part of the profound fear God feels Himself, a fear that His conception of Being (that noble conception of man as a creature of courage and compassion, art, tenderness, skill, stamina, and imagination, exactly the imagination to carry this conception of Being out into the dark emptiness of the universe, there to war against other more malignant conceptions of Being), yes, a fear that precisely this noble conception will not prevail, and instead a wasteful, slovenly, slothful, treacherous, cowardly, and monotonous conception of Being will become the future of man—such a fear must for a God be insupportable. It is the heart of existential logic that God's ultimate victory over the Devil is no more uncertain than the Devil's victory over God—either may conquer man and so give Being a characteristic Good or Evil, or indeed each may exhaust the other, until Being ceases to exist or sinks through seas of entropy into a Being less various, less articulated, less organic, more like plastic than the Nature we know. What a fear is this fear in God that He may lose eventually to the Devil. What abysses of anxiety and pits of woe in such a contemplation. Zusya asking to fear God more, is given instead a vision of God's fear. Like any other man, Zusya draws back in terror.

But is not one of the secrets of the miracle just here? The miracle is revealed to those who can bear to undergo the terror which accompanies it. If intimacy with God is not merely a communion of love but a sharing of the Divine terror, then the beauty of any miracle delivered by God is always accompanied by a fear proportionate to the beauty. Because a miracle is not merely a breach in the laws of nature, but a revelation of the nature of the God behind Nature. If one cannot undergo the fear, one does not deserve the revelation. So our taste for miracles has left us. Man in the Middle Ages lived with dread as a natural accompaniment to his day. His senses uninsulated by the daily use of daily drugs (nicotine, caffeine, aspirin, alcohol, so forth), his mind not guarded by a society which was anti-supernatural, medieval man lived with gods, devils, angels, and demons,

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with witches, warlocks, and spirits. Miracles, while terrifying, were nonetheless a mark of merit. One was honored to receive them. Whereas we reach quickly and in terror for a chemical which will flatten an affect, deaden our senses, damp our madness, or forestall a miracle. Conversely, we also look to a drug to induce a hallucination—because any visitation produced by a drug is exempt from the terror of engaging the supernatural. For we know, even as the experience is upon us, that we are not privy to a vision beyond the lip of death, but merely are offered a derangement of the senses produced by chemicals. Our modern pleasure is that one is witnessing not a miracle but miracle-in-a-theater.

"And the Fire Abated"

The tale is told:
The rabbi of Kalev once spent the Sabbath in a nearby village as the guest of one of the hasidim. When the hour to receive the Sabbath had come, someone suddenly screamed, and a servant rushed in and cried that the barn in which the grain was stored was on fire. The owner wanted to run out, but the rabbi took him by the hand. "Stay!" he said. "I am going to tell you a story." The hasid stayed.
"When our master Rabbi Zusya was young," said the zaddik, "he stoked the stoves in the house of the Great Maggid, for this duty was always assigned to the youngest disciples. Once when he was saying the psalms with great fervor just before the coming of the Sabbath, he was startled by screams from within the house. Sparks had fallen from the stove which he had filled with wood, and since no one was in the living room, a fire had started.
" 'Zusya!' he was reproached. 'There's a fire!'
" 'No matter,' he replied. 'Is it not written: And the fire abated!' At that very same moment the fire abated."
The rabbi of Kalev fell silent. The hasid, whom he still held by the hand, did not dare move. A moment passed and someone called in at the window that the fire in the barn had gone out.

Mood is the earth of the miracle, its garden, its terrain. The mood created by a fire is always in some part Satanic. One senses an avid implacable relentless impatience, a greed to consume, a determination to destroy the material before it, indeed a lunatic intensity within the fire to appropriate the Time which is embodied in the object which is burning. That is why a fire in a fireplace offers comfort. The fire in this case is smaller than ourselves; the material it consumes, the Time it accelerates, are subservient to the mood of calm and benevolence with which we study the fire. We have the ability at any moment to put it out. We are not confronting the force of the devil but rather devil-in-a-theater. In effect, we are dealing with a commonplace miracle. We invoke the supernatural power of fire, but we control it. To primitive man fire was of course always a miracle, a dangerous miracle. He did not know, he could not know—for he had not yet codified the resources of fire—that he would necessarily be able to control it in every contingency. So he approached fire with profound respect, and prayed to various spirits as he put out a fire in order that the demons in the flame be not offended. How natural for him to assume that the intensity of the fire came from the rabidity of the evil contained within the material. By this understanding, it is not insignificant that the grain of the Hasid catches on fire. The grain is his hoarded wealth, his greed, his covetousness. If his heart has been impure and his plans for what he will do with the money he obtains from the sale of the grain are unholy, then the grain—by this unspoken logic—becomes filled with everything which is evil in the Hasid's soul, and so begins to smolder, then bursts into flame. The Hasid is ready to run to the barn, the rabbi restrains him. When the Hasid pauses to listen to the speech of the rabbi, he is in effect ready to relinquish his wealth. So what has been evil in him expires, and what has been heat for the flame in the grain is now cooled. Thus might go the religious logic. The question is whether this logic is utterly without foundation in the real. For philosophically is it not as plausible to assume we have a spirit which is communicable to other people and to the very properties of our environment as it is to assume that spirit does not exist or is not communicable? And is it not equally or almost equally comfortable to assume that a fire may be extinguished by a dramatic shift in mood? Let the burden fall on the philosopher who would prove that the existence of a fire can never be affected by a mood.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Suburban Anti-Semitism

To the Editor of Commentary:

Boris Weiss's "Reilly and I" [April] interested me keenly because our experience as the lone Jewish couple in a quiet neighborhood in southwest Philadelphia was so completely opposite. Our situation, it must be admitted, was simplified by the fact that we had no children.

In our case we bought a somewhat neglected house and modernized it. We landscaped it and put in a lawn and hedge, which were carefully tended. For our garden in the rear our gentile neighbors contributed shrubs and seedlings to supplement our own. If we played our records late at night, we made sure the volume was such that it disturbed nobody. This was the pattern in the neighborhood, and it suited us perfectly. When children from a nearby parochial school walked on our newly seeded lawn, they did the same to the non-Jewish lawns en route. Our good neighbor, Mrs. Dougherty, was continually phoning the Mother Superior about the depredations on her carefully tended lawn and others on the block.

At one point I contracted a fever and was not seen in the neighborhood for a few days. The second day I had two callers, Father Dougherty, the son of my good neighbor, and Father Brown. They had been sent by Mrs. Dougherty to pay a call on a sick neighbor. I confess that my life had been so provincial that, up to that time, I had had no contact with priests, and I wondered how one spoke to them. My concern was unnecessary, however, for conversation flowed freely. This was in the days when Father Coughlin was still in the ascendancy and Lindbergh had denounced President Roosevelt. To my surprise the priests were out of sympathy with the opinions of both Father Coughlin and Lindbergh. Let no one imagine, by the way, that my visitors had come to offer me the consolation of their faith.

One afternoon as the pupils were returning from parochial school I heard a crash against the front window. A large snowball had been thrown. Soon the doorbell rang and a little boy said, "I know who threw the snowball. It was Davey C., who is in Sister X's class." Greatly disquieted, I phoned the Mother Superior. The next afternoon a meek little boy turned up, apologized, and asked me what I would like him to do to make up for it. I gave him some cookies and candy and sent him home. Subsequently, I received a note of apology from his mother. . . .

I'm wondering whose experience is more typical, Mr. Weiss's or mine. Could it be that this is a matter of people getting on or not getting on, and not Jews versus non-Jews?

Abner A. Miller
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To the Editor of Commentary:

I can feel for Boris Weiss intensely, because my husband and I, and our children, recently underwent a similar experience in City Island (the northeast extremity of the Bronx).

We, too, "look funny"—my husband has a beard, and while I do not have long hair or go barefoot, I have that generally untidy and ungroomed look that is associated, I suppose, with the "intellectual woman." . . . The chill that greeted us upon our arrival in the neighborhood was absolutely unmitigated: I suppose because the furniture everyone saw unloaded from the Village movers' wagon looked even funnier than we did.

After a week or so, both of my children were terrified, mostly of a neighbor boy called Butchie; they would not leave the house except to take a bus directly to Orchard Beach. Gangs of teen-agers, not small children but teen-agers, would stand across the street from us and shout, jeer, and generally carry on. Whenever I walked down the street to shop I was followed by Butchie and his gang, who all chose to call me a "beatnik," which hurt me intensely, since no one cares less for that particular literary style than I do. . . .

All this went on unabated from June until the end of October. On Halloween, Butchie and his followers had a great spree of window-breaking and general uproarious-

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ness, with many eggs being tossed, many of them at our windows. The boys had put a jack o'lantern on the porch roof (we had the second story of a house) and the day after Halloween, Butchie and his friends shinnied up to knock it down. Presently my husband came home and as we were eating dinner, still another egg hit the dining room window.

My husband stormed downstairs to the porch, where finding the pieces of broken pumpkin, he directed the boys to throw them into Butchie's yard. Presently thousands of members of Butchie's family came boiling out of the house and demanded to know what was going on. John recited the list of Butchie's misdoings—the beebee gun shot through the window, the eggs, the beatings up of the boys, the name "beatnik" applied to me, the knocking down of the pumpkin—while Butchie's mother stood gasping, "Did my boy do *that*?"

After that there was no trouble with Butchie, and in a couple of weeks the boys were playing football with him. Nobody in City Island ever took us into their hearts, but by then we had stopped wanting to be loved by the City Islanders, and the following May —after a hair-raising experience with our landlord—we moved out. This was the first time I'd lived in Real America after many years of art colonies, the Lower East Side, Mexico, etc. Now I am back in Woodstock, and I shall never try Real America again.

But it hasn't anything to do with being Jewish. Only Real Americans are fit for Real America, and if you don't fit that category, don't try. I don't see much hope of changing anything, and I can only suggest that one stick to Manhattan or places like Woodstock or Provincetown or college towns or live abroad. I don't think that the Real Americans are ever going to rise up . . . but if they do, it is a type they are after —the "intellectual," the non-materialist, the somehow bizarre—and not the Jews. . . .

Why this should be is a matter for a more compassionate soul than I . . . perhaps these people are somehow deeply betrayed and unhappy in a very final and very total way. . . .

ELAINE BALCOMB

Shady, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Weiss ends his story with the admonition: "Sooner or later you, too, may have to take a stand." What stand, may I ask?

Mr. Weiss himself admits that unfortunately he did not know how to handle the problem that confronted him and his children, that he was torn between action and resignation until he had no choice but to run away.

I think that this article reflects the impression readers of COMMENTARY had—and commented on—from the 1961 symposium [on "Jewishness & the Younger Intellectuals"]: Jews who had not been taught why they are Jews were unable to fight for what they could not stand for. So Mr. Weiss instead of consulting a rabbi or a Jewish leader, asked advice from a priest.

I believe many readers will agree that it is time for the Jewish community—including the editors of COMMENTARY—to do something about positive Jewishness and help these troubled Jewish liberals who are trapped so hopelessly and who are unable to teach their own children.

(MRS.) CHARLOTTE M. KULP

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was greatly heartened by the article "Reilly and I." . . . In these days of "brotherhood" it is increasingly easy for us to believe that anti-Semitism is as dead as the plague, and it is this comforting belief, as Mr. Weiss wisely points out, that is the greatest danger. In my own teaching experience, I have encountered the virus, perhaps not as virulent as it once was, but still very much alive.

Unfortunately for me, I do not fit the Jewish stereotype, or I might not have been hired to teach a group of youngsters predominantly Polish in origin. I was their first avowed "Jewish" teacher, although there were other Jews on the staff who had changed both their names and their religion in order to conform to the "norm" in that system.

Looking back on my experience, the most frightening aspect of the situation was the inability of the administrator to accept the fact that some of his students had been preconditioned in their homes. "The school," he told me, when I resigned, "is a democracy, or I myself would resign."

Admittedly, as a first-year teacher, I made many stupid mistakes. Perhaps the greatest of these was to treat the very first swastika carved into my desk as a manifestation of the normal childish desire to "rile" teacher. But I *was* new, fresh from a university which preached "progressive" education, and I permitted the situation to deteriorate "progressively," until I had no choice but resignation. . . .

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Since the teaching profession (like the medical profession) does not like its dirty linen washed in public, I would be blackballed from all jobs if my own name appeared under this letter. . . .

NAME WITHHELD

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Weiss's article deals with a problem that so many of us face today . . . not the problem of anti-Semitism, but of how to deal with aggression. It is the problem of anyone who is a skeptic, a believer in the power of reason, a liberal (in the sense of acknowledging the possibility of the rightness of systems of belief other than his own).

Mr. Weiss is right in assuming that if he were committed to Judaism, he would have escaped his dilemma of what course of action to take. As a member of a congregation, he might have gone to the rabbi with the problem, and the rabbi in turn would have gone to the priest, who would have given more weight to the complaint of a fellow pastor than to that of a mere member of the community. Mr. Weiss may have been suspect in the priest's eyes not for *being* a Jew, but for *not being* a Jew.

And this, I think, is the point. Mr. Weiss himself says that he and his family were looked upon with suspicion because they were different—"beatniks" . . . non-conformists. It is not the believing and/or synagogue-going Jews who are a threat to the social order. They wear shoes, keep their lawns clean, and even drive white Cadillacs. It is the ones who ask questions who are a threat to the establishment.

How can the ones who ask questions defend themselves? When the Reillys begin to carry knives and nuclear weapons, boxing lessons won't help. . . . The only solution for the liberal, non-conforming parent is to raise his children in a community where there are other non-conformists. This means either the big city (a really cosmopolitan city) or a liberal college campus. As a non-believing Jew, one could avoid the problem of aggression by moving to a predominantly Jewish suburb, but this, I think, would present Mr. Weiss and his family with other problems.

THELMA J. HENNER

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . "Boris Weiss's" tale is interesting . . . but it's the pseudonymity which is troublesome. An article in which the point is that "sooner or later, you too, may have to take a stand" hardly seems the place for such evasiveness. The "dangerous kind of ambivalence and malaise" which your writer admits marked his own behavior is only compounded by pseudonymity and, unless "Reilly and I" is a tour de force in the manner of John Berryman's "The Imaginary Jew," . . . then Boris Weiss may be, to accommodate your identifying note, "a young [Jewish] writer who lived for some time in a suburb of New York City" but who is not yet ready to be known as one. Your way, he turns out to be nobody, and Reilly wins again.

J. M. EDELSTEIN

Santa Monica Canyon, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Weiss has written . . . an eloquent indictment of the Reillys of this world and the uncertain Weisses who do not stand up to them. He understands himself, and does not shrink from self-blame, but he covertly ignores his real guilt.

One of the stereotypes of the Jew is that he is "pushy." He tries to worm his way in where he is not wanted, he responds where no invitation has been extended, is loud and demanding when no pattern of acceptance has been established. Whether this is a true picture of the Jew is unimportant. What is important is that Mr. Weiss acted exactly as the stereotype is supposed to, and possibly triggered a dislike the Reillys had not previously felt.

In a word, Mr. Weiss was "pushy," for his child, of course (which does not turn this fault into a virtue as is implied). He was guilty of not allowing his son to establish whatever relation he could with the local children, of avoiding them if no amicable relation proved possible. . . . The Reillys, admittedly vulgar and bigoted, were reasonably friendly before he began his misguided efforts to make Davy a part of the group. It was only after he had caught "Tommy's 'bullet passes,' and . . . the Gang's snowballs" and in general tried to insinuate his son into the gang, that the Reillys' car sailed past his wife.

This does not condone Reilly's action, but suggests that Mr. Weiss is to blame in a subtler and less noble sense than he indicates. It is not merely that he was afraid to stand up for himself, but that he overextended himself, not that he failed to be a man, but that he was too clearly the Jew and the alien (by his own admission, he was considered something of a "beatnik"). Apparently unsure of his Jewishness, he

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could not forebear to try to be "regular." This pose was resented; he was not "regular" in terms of Whyte Street, and a sham is a sham everywhere. The result, as might have been expected, was the ostracism of his children and a contempt for the "Jew."

Mr. Weiss is right in saying that under certain conditions one ought to fight, but he uses this truth to cloak his mistake in allowing the situation to develop. Had he simply lived with his alienation from his ancestry and not tried to make his children part of the group (one big, happy family of man), it is possible that no problem would have arisen.

SONDRA ROSENBERG
STUART SILVERMAN

Auburn University
Auburn, Alabama

Books for Children

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I don't know whether I qualify as one of the "experts" that Jason Epstein writes about in his article ["Books for American Children," February]. . . . But since I spend a considerable number of my working hours reading and evaluating a substantial proportion of the 2,000 new children's books published every year, I may belong to that fraternity Mr. Epstein scorns. . . .

So much Mr. Epstein says is correct, that one feels churlish arguing with his unfortunate and unfair point of view. People like Josette Frank have done enormous good and have helped to inspire many children with the rewards of reading. Mr. Epstein calls the emphasis on the child's education a "prissy rationalization of the children's book experts," but the fact is that such a concern is imperative today. Children are growing up in a far more dreadful, complicated, and treacherous world than the children of the 19th century, of whose literature Mr. Epstein is so enamored. Because of this, the books of the 19th century appear to them remote and disconnected from the emotions that overwhelm them. How do our children live with the threat of nuclear war? What kind of books do they pick up having returned from first-grade after one of those under-the-desk air raid drills? Does one read *Peter Rabbit* to them—even Beatrix Potter's original version? Or, if they are older, perhaps even *Ivanhoe*? . . . Children today stay away in droves from the so-called classics, and not because they are reading pallid modern literature, not because they are intellectually less endowed than children of earlier generations, not because they read comics—but because these older books do not help them come to terms with themselves and do not help them perceive the world in which they live. . . .

(I am not suggesting that the world in which children live should necessarily be the one in which they will continue to live. Hopefully, the world will change for the better, and the children of today will take part in shaping this change. Am I naïve in believing that the books they read can help them develop a point of view and strengthen their resolve?)

. . . The current crop of children's titles leaves much to be desired, but not for the reasons Mr. Epstein cites. It is not the "experts" who have created this situation. It is simply that editors and publishers are out to make money, and they look for titles that seem safe and salable. Books are beautifully illustrated and well-designed . . . often covering up poor and even silly texts. As one searches through the titles of the past ten years . . . there is almost nothing that reflects the problems of race relations in our country, very little that describes poverty, war, and other such realities. . . . The few books that have attempted to deal with these realities are, on the whole, weak and unconvincing, and any child worth his salt knows that they are "fakes."

Many books about Negroes have appeared—the majority of them about the Civil War period. It is as if the authors took cognizance of the Supreme Court decision and its aftermath, but could not quite bring themselves to deal with it, and so they tip their hats in the direction of an historical past. . . . One searches for books that might illuminate the problems of the Puerto Rican leaving his home and taking up residence in an environment frequently hostile. . . .

For years some of the "experts" have been trying to influence publishers and editors to consider subjects of this sort. This is what is needed—more reality, not less.

(MRS.) ANN G. WOLFE
American Jewish Committee
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read Jason Epstein's article with interest and some exasperation. He is right in pointing out the triviality, didacticism, and dreariness of many books for children being published today . . . [and] in reminding us of the qualities of imagination and the anti-conventional attitudes reflected in some of the books children have long cherished. . . .

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But when Mr. Epstein of Random House takes off after the professional critics of children's literature, he loses me. Who is responsible for the flood of mediocrity he complains of, the nearly two thousand books for children published annually? . . . Certainly there are critics in the service of publishers and critics alarmed by the sight of polysyllables in a book designed for children. Like children's book editors and librarians, they represent all degrees of competence. No one seriously concerned with children's literature would have anything but contempt for the "'revision" of Beatrix Potter quoted by Mr. Epstein. . . .

The outlook is probably not so grim as Mr. Epstein thinks. Children are selective. The few titles listed in this article do not reflect the true extent of the modern literature of quality to which children respond. . . . Mr. Epstein makes no mention, for example, of the tales of Walter de la Mare, Eleanor Farjeon, James Thurber, of beloved books like *Charlotte's Web* or *The Little Prince*. Children should be directed to these and books of similar quality, just as they must be to the work of older writers like Kenneth Grahame, George MacDonald, E. Nesbit, Howard Pyle. . . . What the classics require is re-evaluation as well as rediscovery—not mere piety. A vote against *Ivanhoe* is not an act of heresy. The question is not, as Mr. Epstein implies, "Are we abandoning the good-but-difficult classics in favor of the mediocre-but-easy moderns?" The question is simply. . . . "Which among the old books and the new are the best?"

RITA LIPKIS

Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mr. Epstein is irked by authorities on children's literature, two of whom he singles out for attack—May Hill Arbuthnot and Nancy Larrick, the author of *A Parent's Guide to Children's Reading*. Yet surely the author of a guide (not a definitive work) is entitled to limit her selection according to her own criteria. As she explains in the paragraph Mr. Epstein quotes only partially, Miss Larrick has chosen to list books which have been around children's libraries long enough to have established themselves as solid favorites, but not long enough to have been read by the parents when they were young. Any children's librarian who has assisted parents in book selection can tell you that this is a valid distinction for guiding parents. . . .

Mr. Epstein challenges Miss Larrick's statement that books are fun, but just because he preferred going to the movies when he was a boy does not mean that books aren't fun. With both adults and children, reading fills two needs, that of education and that of recreation. . . . Why is it almost impossible for a public library to have enough circulating copies of Dr. Seuss to fill the demand, if it is not that the children want to read them for *fun*? On a less lofty plane, what about the Nancy Drews . . . deplorable by all literary standards, yet perennially popular with girls at a certain age level? . . . Or the Hardy Boys or Rich Brants (this generation's Tom Swifts)?

A second target . . . is May Arbuthnot, author of *Children and Books*. . . . To prove that the writing is "drab and abstract, . . . almost illiterate," he presents two quotes. Lifted from context, the second one does indeed appear to be erroneous word usage, but as for the first, "Prodded on by weary drivers, the camels swayed slowly," it seems an excellent piece of onomatopoetic writing to this reader.

. . . There are many passages in Miss Arbuthnot's work, considered by many librarians a classic, with which Mr. Epstein would completely concur, such as in her enthusiasm for Beatrix Potter's work, but his aggressive attitude seems to indicate that he is not really familiar with her books as a whole . . . [Yet] I feel that Mr. Epstein has more in common with Miss Arbuthnot than he realizes, just as there is much in what he says with which I most heartily concur. Anyone working with children's books today in anything except merchandising must be somewhat troubled; but after all, why should we worry? Children are not going to read books they don't want to read just because book manufacturers are turning them out, and they are going to find those books that appeal to them wherever they are hidden.

HELEN H. SHELTON

Bethesda, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . As a librarian who works with children and their books, I found Mr. Epstein's article interesting and challenging . . . [but] I would suggest that he be more sure of his facts when submitting critical material of this sort.

The Carey-Thomas Award . . . honors publishing at its best and is not given by the same people who offer the Newbery Medal. It is an award given a publisher, and from 1942 to 1958 appears never to have been

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given for a juvenile book. . . . There is moreover only one Newbery award annually (not four for 1961, as he states); there are runners-up annually, of which the number varies from year to year.

[Nevertheless] I am sympathetic with Mr. Epstein's point of view on many counts. His publishing venture the Looking Glass Library is most admirable; parents and librarians alike are grateful for these attractive, inexpensive reprints of classics. . . .

KATHERINE E. ASHLEY
Youngstown, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Good criticism of children's books is overdue and it was a pleasure to read Jason Epstein's appraisal of the current situation. I can testify to the limited challenges offered young readers from my experience some years ago with textbook publishing. It was the rage then to count words in first- and second-grade arithmetic books to make sure that they contained no more than a certain number of new ones. The editors were afraid that too many new words would interfere with the children's solving of problems and advertised this limitation of vocabulary as an asset of their books.

Educators, and their editors, seem to have overlooked the fact that children are eclectic, that their vocabulary is nourished at all times and in many ways, and not just when they are reading primers. As Mr. Epstein points out in his comparison of excerpts from *Peter Rabbit,* the trick is not to hold down the vocabulary level but to make the writing so exciting that children will want to read, and more importantly, that their parents will want to read with them.

. . . Are there some children's books written since World War II that . . . will survive into the next century, or will our descendants, too, be reading Caldecott and Carroll?

MRS. MAX FRANKEL
Chevy Chase, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . As a child I read for fun, with an apple or a cookie in one hand. My parents and teachers surrounded me with books, and I read according to my needs at the moment, good, bad, and indifferent—including the copy on cereal boxes. Children have preferences, just as adults do; a well-written book may be recognized but not necessarily liked. And I still have a warm spot in my heart for *The Bobbsey Twins.*

Children read for fun today. Hundreds, thousands, and I daresay, millions of them! Mr. Epstein should visit us at our town library any day or evening, and especially during the summer try to push his way through the crowds of children!

LUCILLE WALLOWER
Children's Librarian
Jenkintown, Pennsylvania

Portrait of an Addict

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

R. S. Baker is himself guilty of stereotyping the addict ["People Get Hooked," March] or at least of grievous underestimation of the psychopathology that leads to narcotics addiction. Janet turns out to be the lovable, albeit crazy, mixed-up girl next door . . . "who has been drawn into an encounter with narcotics" . . . and whose tragedy would have been averted in another decade. It is not the drug, but the impulse to use it which makes an addict of a given individual. If drugs are not available, other roads to Lethe are found. Certainly, addicts differ, but to dismiss what they have in common is to throw out the scientific baby with the bathwater. Otherwise, a most interesting article.

(DR.) EUGENE H. KAPLAN
Great Neck, New York

MR. BAKER *writes:*

I find it difficult to quarrel with Dr. Kaplan, because he seems to stress many of the same points I *thought* I was making in "People Get Hooked." However, I did not mean to imply that Janet Clark's "tragedy would have been averted in another decade," but merely that it might have taken a form other than narcotics addiction and that the choice of forms would probably differ from those available to, say, a male raised in a Negro ghetto. I had hoped thereby to dispel some of the horrendous mythology that surrounds the topic and causes such things as the unreasoning resistance to the really splendid accomplishments of the Synanon groups in Santa Monica and elsewhere. (The Synanon people, incidentally, have provided dramatic proof that removing the addict from drugs is but a preliminary to the real work of healing the underlying psychopathology.)

I would hope that with the recent end of the Anslinger regime Dr. Kaplan might set out to persuade his fellow physicians to assume their proper humane and scientific role in working with this group of sick people.

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Today's Rabbis

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his observations on "The Modern Rabbi," [February] Rabbi Petuchowski puts his finger on the dilemma of "rabbis" who are not rabbis, i.e., scholars in the field of Jewish learning. He sees an aroused laity as the only solution for congregations to get exactly what they seek.

Although he draws his examples primarily from the Reform and Conservative rabbinate, the trend to lower standards of learning . . . was until recently in evidence among the Orthodox as well. While, I suppose, no Orthodox school numbers among its graduates men who . . . cannot read unpointed Hebrew, there are certainly some who cannot make much sense of a page in the Talmud.

Yet in the past two decades, a radical transformation has taken place in the Orthodox seminaries. . . . The new emphasis on genuine learning is primarily the accomplishment of one man. At his death, thousands turned out . . . to honor Rabbi Aaron Kotler. In a demonstration of reverence, they saw in him the man who had turned the tide. In his Yeshivah in Lakewood, he taught not only subject matter, but by his personal example of zealous love of Torah, he inspired his students to set learning above all else. The fire caught on and spread throughout the many schools of Torah in the land. . . .

That so much of the American rabbinate is a burlesque is less the fault of the laity than of those on the faculties of the rabbinical seminaries who give their imprimatur to the kind of student who cares little and knows less. . . .

(Dr.) N. L. Rabinovitch
Charleston, South Carolina

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Rabbi Petuchowski points up a situation which is, alas, not sufficiently recognized by laymen. The most disturbing aspect of the problem is that while the rabbinate and seminaries are not unaware of the current dilemma, they seem wholly unwilling to change direction. They continue on their merry way, manufacturing clergymen instead of preparing rabbis. . . .

Dr. Petuchowski indicates that the redirection will have to come from a dissatisfied laity. A journal like Commentary can be an important outlet for such dissatisfaction, for it is not chained to a sponsor's point of view. . . . Let us hope that laymen will make themselves heard, demanding more from the rabbi, and thus redirecting the entire rabbinate toward its traditional role.

Tom L. Freudenheim
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his article Rabbi Petuchowski gives a critical review of my book *The Power Within Us*. Rabbi Petuchowski lists the roster of "authorities" quoted by me, stating that in the majority of instances I cite them in order to "dignify simple platitudes." . . .

I believe that anyone who has read my book carefully must conclude that the quotations, without exception, are not employed by me to bolster my spiritual thesis, but merely to serve as illustrations of the points in question. *The Power Within Us* is designed to serve as a self-help book for the many among us who are sorely in need of spiritual guidance. The main intention of my book is to make us aware of the great spiritual potential which God has put at our disposal, and from which can accrue great advantage in our personal lives.

What has been the function of true religion through the ages if not to show man a way of life and raise him to a higher level of consciousness? Will Rabbi Petuchowski refuse to concede that this is still the task of our rabbinic leadership of today? . . . Is it harping upon "a simple platitude" to admonish the Jewish businessman of today to apply his religion in the sphere of the market place and not merely to pay lip service to Judaism?

As a teacher of rabbis, Rabbi Petuchowski should know that most of our Jews do not pray, because they do not know how to . . . because unfortunately many of our spiritual leaders have failed to teach them the technique of prayer. During the seminary years of many of our rabbis, little emphasis was placed upon the practical aspects of the rabbinate . . . while a lot of time was spent in abstract discussions and theoretical studies.

Rabbi Petuchowski takes exception to the fact that I would judge the teachings of traditional Judaism by the criteria of Western thought. Is he not familiar with the teachings of Samson Raphael Hirsch, or Ezriel Hildesheimer, at whose seminary I was privileged to receive my rabbinical training?

Clear thinkers within traditional Judaism have never been afraid to expose their teaching to the critique of Western thought. . . .

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Traditional Judaism, to which I adhere, does not view what transpires in the realm of thought under the aspect of Western civilization, but *sub specie aeternitatis.*

To compare *The Power Within Us* to *Peace of Mind* is fair neither to the late Rabbi Liebman, of blessed memory, for whose book and for whose teaching I have great admiration, nor to my own, which was never designed to compete with it. Our books do not belong in the same category. While Liebman's book attempts to establish the compatibility of religion and psychiatry, mine is exclusively a self-help book, offering guideposts for creative living to the individual.

To accuse me of aping the Christians is utterly ridiculous; and Rabbi Petuchowski's attitude of ex cathedraism is the manifestation of a definite lack of humility on the part of a teacher of rabbinics.

(RABBI) KURT KLAPPHOLZ
Brooklyn, New York

RABBI PETUCHOWSKI *writes:*

Rabbi Klappholz is unnecessarily upset by my review of his book. I have no quarrel with those who want "to make us aware of the great spiritual potential which God has put at our disposal, and from which can accrue great advantage in our personal lives." It was just that I was a little overwhelmed by all the authorities he led into the field, and it is possible that my review showed this. But I am definitely *not* guilty of the two "sins" with which I am charged. I did not "take exception" to the fact that the criteria of Western thought are invoked. An author writing in America in the second half of the 20th century could not do anything else. Of course, I know about S. R. Hirsch and about the Hildesheimer seminary. I know about them, and I am aware of their historical significance. But I am also aware of the fact that, until comparatively recent years, Orthodoxy in America was anything but under the sway of the ideas of German Neo-Orthodoxy. The fact that Rabbi Klappholz is under that sway was, therefore, a fact sufficiently important to deserve mention in an article about the modern American rabbinate. I can only hope that he will have many followers in the ranks of Orthodoxy. Moreover, since my main task was one of description, I also did not "accuse" Rabbi Klappholz of "aping the Christians." As a matter of historical fact, I would have no hesitation in stating that there are Christian influences in the medieval *Book of the Pious* —without wishing such a description to be taken as an "accusation." All of us who write on religious matters today are, consciously or unconsciously, subject to environmental influences. Again, in a description of the modern American rabbinate, I do not think that it is out of place to draw attention to such cultural cross-fertilization. If there was any accusation at all in my review, it was not about that cross-fertilization in general, but about the particular *genre* of Christian literature (viz.: Norman Vincent Peale) by which Rabbi Klappholz has consciously chosen to let himself be influenced. But I would venture to suggest that, in a free country, both author and reviewer are entitled to the expression of their respective prejudices.

Presidential Faith

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Murray Kempton ["Epistles from the Eisenhower Age," March] critically examines the high moral "tone" of former President Eisenhower's administration and the president's dedication to religious faith. For an office regarded as the most important in the world, can the nation afford to accept anything less?

ALVIN B. LEBAR
Perth Amboy, New Jersey

The Podhoretz Papers

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz's original article ["My Negro Problem—And Ours," February; "Letters from Readers," March, April, May] has produced comment that is perhaps twice as significant as anything he said. I have followed it for three months without finding a suggestion that some men who are incapable of loving the abstraction "Negro" are yet quite capable of loving the abstraction "justice." The latter may be a frigid, inhuman emotion, but at least it would immunize us against tolerance of such things as the Birmingham affair. For one, I believe that lack of it is what makes us vulnerable to many kinds of psychopathy, including virulent racism.

GERALD W. JOHNSON
Baltimore, Maryland

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THE RABBI AND THE HERETIC

BEN EMUNAH LI-KHEFIRAH ["Between Faith and Heresy"]. By EPHRAIM SHEMUELI. *Masada. 240 pp.*

Reviewed by MARVIN FOX

MR. SHEMUELI'S account of the 17th-century controversy between Leon da Modena and Uriel da Costa constitutes the major part of what is a fascinating and important study in faith and heresy—a subject that has gone quite out of fashion in our era of "dogma-less" Judaism. By focusing on these two men, one of them a pronounced heretic under ban of excommunication, and the other a respected rabbi, the author has served to revivify for us those basic issues in Jewish religion about which, as Solomon Schechter once remarked, our "flexibility has progressed so far as to classify Judaism among the invertebrate species, the lowest order of living things."

Leon da Modena, rabbi of Venice, was both a learned, faithful Jew and an urbane, cultivated Venetian. Though he is best known for treatises vigorously defending rabbinic Judaism against its detractors, he also wrote Italian verses, maintained close friendships with the leaders of Christian society, and was thoroughly at home in the Christian culture of his day. For all his worldliness, however, Modena preserved an absolute public obedience to rabbinic law and opinion, an obedience which, according to Mr. Shemueli, derived from serious weaknesses in his character: an enormous fear of criticism and jealousy of popular approval. He rendered his decisions to the community with one eye on the possible reaction to them; he refused to express his theological opinions openly and became an artful practitioner of the esoteric. (In this connection, Mr. Shemueli points to Modena's frequent and peculiar use of the words *"sakhal"* and *"kesil,"* which ordinarily simply mean "fool" but which in Modena's work are used to describe "anyone who publicly expresses an unpopular opinion.")

Uriel da Costa, Modena's putative antagonist, was the son of a Marrano family and grew up as a devout Catholic. Da Costa had none of Modena's timidity in the face of public opinion, and when he fell into doubt about the validity of Christianity, he finally decided to return to the Judaism of his ancestors. With his family he left Portugal and settled in Amsterdam, where he was received into the Jewish community. Before long, however, new doubts arose—Da Costa found rabbinic tradition to be a violation and falsification of the written Torah. He began by denying the authority of the rabbis, went on to deny such established doctrines as the immortality of the soul, and ended by doubting much of the written Torah itself. His heresy was published and spoken publicly, and brought the inevitable consequence among European Jewry at that time: a ban of excommunication. Rabbi Leon da Modena was among those who signed and proclaimed the ban, and further, he wrote several tracts in answer to Da Costa's heretical attacks against rabbinic Judaism.

Yet the controversy between these two men—as Shemueli, who is sympathetic to both, points out—became sharp and bitter precisely because at bottom they had so much in common. Modena, defender of rabbinic law, was himself plagued by the very doubts Da Costa had voiced. Beneath his piety, in the depths of his thought, he rejected much established Jewish doctrine, as well as established halachic decision. The most significant difference between him and Da Costa was that, having been born and bred a Jew, he felt a deep attachment to the Jewish people: he saw himself as a link in the chain of Jewish history, tied to the Jewish past and responsible for the Jewish future, and was therefore reluctant to do or say anything that might reflect either on the tradition or on the people. Da Costa, grow-

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ing up a Christian, never came to have that sense of personal identification with the people to whose faith he so briefly returned. His concern, both in adopting Judaism and then in rejecting it, had been only for his own salvation. This difference—coupled with the difference in character that left Da Costa unconcerned about the personal consequences of voicing his ideas and Modena seemingly preoccupied with very little else—furnished the ground for the curious debate that took place between these two brother-doubters.

Mr. Shemueli's view of Modena, if correct, goes a long way toward substantiating his notion about the authorship of the *Kol Sakhal* ("A Fool's Voice," which purports to be a dialogue between a heretic and a believer), itself long under controversy. A standard view of the document, the late Isaiah Sonne's, is that the heretical arguments in the *Kol Sakhal* are essentially those of Da Costa, recorded at length by Modena merely in order to refute them. Mr. Shemueli agrees with the first supposition; but since Modena never wrote his refutation, except for a few pages, he does not accept Sonne's idea that Modena's main purpose was to refute Da Costa. He says that Modena "did not merely lend his technical literary skill to Da Costa's work . . . he did not merely translate the words of Da Costa, did not merely order and explain them, but he also added arguments of his own and of others, drawing on the whole literature of polemic against the established tradition. He impressed on the book the stamp of his own personality, his opinions, his doubts, his yearnings, and his spiritual afflictions." What may have begun as a dialogue with the *sakhal,* the foolish unbeliever, quickly became for Modena a dialogue with himself. Like Da Costa, his questioning of the validity of rabbinic authority in the name of fundamental Biblical law finally led him to doubt certain of the fundamental articles of Jewish faith.

WHETHER OR NOT Mr. Shemueli's reading of Leon da Modena is correct is a matter for the trained historian to decide. What is of indisputable significance in his book is the application he finds in the religious struggles of Modena and Da Costa to the problems of contemporary Jews. Implicit in the telling of his story is the notion that these two men really suffered from the impositions of an official, communally sanctioned orthodoxy whose norms were prescriptive: Da Costa paying with his mental health and perhaps with his life for his challenge of that orthodoxy, and Modena perhaps an even heavier price—namely, his self-respect—for his docile conformity with it. Believing that even in the 17th century the old categories of orthodoxy and heresy were beginning to lose their internal force and to depend on external imposition, Mr. Schemueli regards contemporary Orthodox Judaism as an entirely dead option (even though there are many Orthodox Jews who live as active participants in contemporary culture). The problem for us, then—not so different from Modena's—is how to maintain and give expression to our connection with a tradition whose fundamentals in dogma we do not accept. How, in other words, "can we transmit to a non-orthodox generation the culture of generations of believers?"

Mr. Shemueli's formulation of the problem is surely the correct one. No one will deny that in contemporary Jewish life even most of what goes by the name of "religion" or "Judaism" is really secular. However his own solution to this problem—offered in the concluding section of his book—seems hardly adequate. He pleads for a greater tolerance toward divergent religious views, and urges that we abandon the terminology of the medieval Jewish philosophers in favor of theological usage that would be more congenial to the contemporary mind. Such proposals, though perhaps unexceptionable, are at best only a way of opening up the channels of communication. The challenge of secularism—and particularly of the atheistic existentialism and nihilism that Mr. Shemueli regards as genuine counter-faiths—can hardly be met by an enlargement of tolerance and the use of modern philosophic language.

"God," says Mr. Shemueli, "is the symbol of the possibility of reflection on what I truly am and what I truly want, a symbol of the validity of my own self-knowledge and of the honesty of my desire for freedom, i.e. my self-realization, my redemption. God is the symbol of the possibility of understanding, justice, love . . . a symbol that those things which I must believe are not only private

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certainties, but public certainties." In spite of himself, he seems to agree with Nietzsche that God is dead: for in his system the transcendent God of Jewish tradition is to be replaced by reflective man. The God who once created heaven and earth is to become a symbol of man's aspirations, and we are offered a pious (but ungrounded) affirmation that the symbol is itself a guarantee that man's spiritual aspirations are not in vain.

Mr. Shemueli, then, is a man who is really seeking the comfortable assurances of traditional religion at the same time that he aligns himself with an essentially secular position. One does not, however, remain faithful to Judaism merely by choosing a language which speaks of God. While traditional Judaism grounded its moral values in a transcendent God, modern secularism teaches that man must find his values in himself or in his society. Mr. Shemueli's God, who demands nothing more concrete than self-reflection, is not the God of whom we say *"asher kiddeshanu be-mitzvotav"* ("who made us holy through His commandments"). Of this much Modena and Da Costa seemed more clearly aware three centuries ago than their modern interpreter seems today.

The book ends by quoting the following lines from the poem *Keter Malkhut* ("Royal Crown") by Solomon ibn Gabirol:

Thou art God, and all things formed are
Thy servants and worshippers.
Yet is not Thy glory diminished by reason
of those that worship aught beside Thee.
For the yearning of them all is to draw
nigh to Thee.

Mr. Shemueli stresses that the poet sees even those "who worship aught beside Thee" as truly seeking God, and concludes that Gabirol stands with him beyond orthodoxy and heresy. He would have done well to go on to the very next lines of the poem, in which the poet says:

But they are like the blind,
Setting their faces forward on the King's
highway,
Yet still wandering from the path.
One sinketh into the well of a pit
And another falleth into a snare,
But all imagine they have reached their
desire,
Albeit they have suffered in vain.

TWO NOVELS

PAST EVE AND ADAM'S. By THOMAS F. CURLEY. *Atheneum 365 pp. $5.95.*
AN ANSWER FROM LIMBO. By BRIAN MOORE. *Atlantic-Little, Brown. 322 pp. $5.00.*

Reviewed by RICHARD GILMAN

THE NOVEL, which was once concerned with a diagnosis of society, has more and more come to be a cure the physician prescribes for himself. Novels, in other words, which used to be about other people, are increasingly these days about the artist. The artist as hero and/or victim, the intellectual as moral arena or political intersection, the professor as *cul de sac*—such are the disaffiliated, self-conscious characters who inhabit these all but solipsistic works of fiction. In them the situation of the imagination itself has become more significant than the discoveries it was once expected to make about the world. The artist in action replaces the artist as instigator of action; his own existence becomes the subject of his work, instead of its impetus. The writer is trapped in a mirror and the result is that his erstwhile quarry—the mysterious beasts circling beyond his net (other people, in short)—is never quite captured.

Thomas Curley and Brian Moore both aspire to shatter the mirror, though by different means. Curley is trying to do three things at once: to explore and fix the relations of the past to the present, of the imagination to the spirit, and of the artist to the world. The attempt seems diffuse and over-ambitious, especially in contrast to Moore's intense, swift shaft driven into his much narrower subject, which is neither more nor less than that staple of literature-about-literature, the danger a writer runs of losing his soul. But though the two books proceed quite differently, and though Curley's central figure emerges in possession of his soul while Moore's does not, the novels are not really that different. They are related by their failure, despite incidental accomplishments, to become independent, self-sustaining, unfettered works of the imagination, and this is because in the end both remain too near the data and mechanisms of the artist's situation.

Their authors are related in more palpable

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ways. Both are knowing, sophisticated—up on the jargon, cultural catch-phrases, sexual mythology, and the tastes and odors of metropolitan crisis living. Each writes cleanly, although Moore is superior in verbal matters; he is incapable of such falls from literary grace—untypical as these might be—as Curley's "a cold fury possessed him" or "I went down deeper and deeper into the sordid world of vice." Both intersperse, like borrowed stars from the big leagues of this genre, major Jewish characters among their predominantly Irish ones. (Moore, who is from Ireland by way of Canada, handles *yarmelke, nebbish,* and "so eat a little" as though to the *seder* born; Curley, who is Irish by way of his ancestors, is only slightly less successfully ecumenical.) And finally both introduce, as a subsidiary element in their narratives, a Catholic presence which functions as dramatic agent, but never as a real source of engagement with religious matters.

"Will I be able to revenge myself on the past by transforming it into a world of words?" the twenty-nine-year-old novelist-cautionary figure of *An Answer from Limbo* asks himself. But he has been here seven years, an Irishman with an American, part-Jewish wife he met abroad, and that preliminary question is superseded by the broader dilemma of situation and identity. "The literary life in New York was a vast charade in which people pretended to be other than they were," he reflects. "Their ambitions remained private fantasies: they had neither real beliefs nor the courage to implement them. Was I one of them?"

It is the fear that he may be, rather than any ineluctable creative summons, that drives him to finish his novel (characteristically, we are given no indication of what it contains nor any evidence that he is in fact a good writer) and to shepherd it toward publication. To do this he quits his job on a popular magazine, gets his wife to go back to work, and brings his aging mother over from Ireland to take care of their children. The consequences contain no trace of surprise: his book becomes his life, his wife in frustration enters into a degrading love affair, and his mother, a Catholic appalled by her son's change of gods, dies a horrifying death which is a direct result of his self-absorption.

In the end he is forced to acknowledge that he is lost, having "altered beyond all self-recognition." But it is precisely the weakness of the book that everything has been so strictly presaged, that his mutilation expresses less the free fate of a character in the imagination than a ritualistic act of exorcism on the part of his creator. It isn't that such things don't happen to writers; it is that what happens to writers is only in rare, highly symbolic cases as useful or interesting as what they tell us is happening to us.

PAST EVE AND ADAM'S (the title is from *Finnegans Wake*) also suffers from an arranged resolution, an imposed destiny. Mr. Curley, in his attempt to understand the past as it shapes the present, has created three major characters who are made to divide among themselves, much too schematically, the possible range of attitudes and reactions. Philip Fay is a Catholic who is searching for his origins, Sid Stein is a Jew who is wholly contained in the present, and Gerald Weems is a Protestant for whom the past is a burden and an enemy. The first two are painters, the other a stockbroker; Fay and Stein are related through simple friendship, Fay and Weems through an involved history that includes Weems's early love for Fay's sister and an affair Fay's father had with Weems's aunt.

It is Fay's search for the truth about his father, more particularly for the reasons behind his father's hatred of him, that provides the novel with its plot and its momentum. The quest is an elaborate one, with many tangents and recoils, but its result is to leave Fay liberated and restored to life—he had been an alcoholic who lived by peddling his pornographic drawings—because he has learned that "facts, what exactly happened exactly when and exactly where, are not exact, are not even definitely there. . . . Facts are more unknowable than God."

To be free of the tyranny of facts is, Curley implies, to be released into the spirit. For Fay, a mystical but non-practicing Catholic whom another character describes as a "holy fool," the spirit can now manifest itself in his vocation as a painter. Stein, on the other hand, is a man whose art has always liberated him from the facts; he is

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a charming primitive who functions in the novel as a kind of "natural man," for whom trials and struggles for identity are unnecessary. And finally there is Weems, the stockbroker, the non-artist whose life is entirely composed of facts and who therefore remains a victim of the past and of an identity that can never be replenished.

Curley has tried earnestly to make their story work, but though he succeeds along the way in producing moments of beauty and revelation, they are discontinuous and tend to sink back into the novel's self-consciousness, its atmosphere of diagnosis and coerced meaning. "I wanted art to be in and of the world, and not in the realm of private myth," Stein says at one point. What is wrong with *Past Eve and Adam's* is that it lies somewhere between the two regions, repulsed by the one and mistrustful of the other.

VISIONS AND REVISIONS

THE CONSERVATIVE ENEMY: A PROGRAM FOR RADICAL REFORM IN THE SIXTIES. By C. A. R. CROSLAND. *Schocken Books. 251 pp. $4.95.*

Reviewed by LEWIS A. COSER

C. A. R. CROSLAND, a former Oxford Fellow in Economics and a member of Parliament, has long been associated with the Right wing of the Labor party, and his earlier book, *The Future of Socialism,* is generally regarded as the most sophisticated presentation of its case. The essays collected in the present volume bring his earlier arguments up to date and attempt to furnish additional evidence. Since it now seems likely that the British Labor party will win the 1964 elections in Britain and constitute the next government, *The Conservative Enemy* commands special attention—quite apart from its substantial intellectual merits.

Mr. Crosland considers himself a "socialist." However, this merely indicates, at least to the American reader, how misleading political labels have become. Were Mr. Crosland in American politics he would almost certainly belong to the A.D.A. rather than to Norman Thomas's party. His position is a reasonable and moderate one to modernize the British economy and polity. He is aware of many shortcomings, but asserts repeatedly that "We must not, of course, magnify the extent of the problem." Things are by no means as rotten and evil as some Left-wing socialists would have us believe, and certainly there is no need to "attack this society root and branch"—a practice he attributes to the distasteful aberations prevalent "amongst bourgeois Chelsea *literati.*" Reasonable men will press for such things as higher death duties, a capital gains tax, and a Galbraithian program of larger outlays for roads, hospitals, housing, and the like. They will demand effective transportation planning, a curb on harmful advertisements, an increase in the rate of economic growth, better social security, as well as libertarian reforms in such matters as the abolition of capital punishment and the persecution of homosexuals. Lastly they will work for major educational reforms, especially the broadening of access to the "public schools" (but emphatically not their abolition) in order to break down the class snobbery and elitist monopolies that often govern the recruitment of men for top positions.

All these, of course, are eminently worthwhile reforms, but they sound, in the main, like a prudent, matter-of-fact program to make Britain into a more efficient and egalitarian modern industrial society, rather than like a traditional plea for socialism. Indeed, in many respects, Crosland's "program for radical reform" seems to go no further than suggesting it is high time that British Labor helped Britain to become more nearly like the United States. This is, of course, a far cry from the dominant 19th-century traditions of British socialism, such as William Morris's idea that "Socialism is fellowship." Certainly, we do not find in *The Conservative Enemy* any of the passionate outcries at injustice and exploitation which formed the basis of the socialist ethos in the past. Instead, Crosland and his colleagues (compare, for example, Douglas Jay's recently published *Socialism in the New Society*) talk like conscientious and high-minded bookkeepers.

This is an interesting phenomenon which deserves some further comment. At present British socialism seems to be experiencing a development roughly similar to that

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famous "dissociation of sensibility" which T. S. Eliot finds in British literature after the age of the metaphysical poets. In Milton and his successors a cleavage began to appear between feeling and thought, "values" and "facts." Unlike John Donne or Sir Thomas Browne, who were able to think and feel simultaneously, either in verse or in prose, the later writers were expected, as Basil Willey has remarked, to think prosaically and to feel poetically.

Prose was for communicating facts; poetry was for communicating pleasurable emotions or flights of fancy. Now, in much of the literature of 19th-century socialism, the writer's emotion and factual descriptions, his moral indignation and critical analysis, were deeply fused—one cannot read Marx's chapter on "The Working Day" in *Capital,* for example, without realizing how much his anger contributes, despite his pretensions to dispassionate description. However, in present-day socialism this fusion of sensibility has split apart. Thus we get Messrs. Crosland and Jay arguing that Labor ought to make Britain into a tidy, well-lighted, salubrious, and efficiently managed society, while Raymond Williams and his colleagues on Labor's Left talk about alienation and the need to recreate community and fraternity, about the meaninglessness and even perniciousness of mass culture in an industrial landscape where traditional working-class culture has been eroded and replaced by nothing better than the greedy pursuit of a room at the top. The efficient social engineers on Labor's Right regard with a measure of contempt and pity the somewhat disreputable Utopian dreamers on Labor's New Left with their often rather tenuous hold on the political realities of the moment. Do you really think, they argue, that you ever will get a chance to get elected on the basis of policies and feelings derived from Marx and William Morris?

I DO NOT wish to suggest that this dissociation is consciously experienced by the average member of the Labor party. Most trade-union M.P.s probably are not even aware of it at all, and men like Labor's new parliamentary leader, Harold Wilson, are much too clever politicians not to know that their road to power would be blocked were they to associate themselves too closely with either the New Left or the Right wing. Yet, the ideological cleavage is nonetheless real enough, and it marks not only contemporary socialism in Britain but on the continent as well.

Take the New Left and Right attitude toward Labor's rank-and-file. One of the recent policy papers of the New Left is called *Out of Apathy,* and, as the title suggests, the writers stake the future of British socialism on a revival of rank-and-file fervor, a renewed sense of mass participation in political life, a rebirth of community. They argue that with the decline of the workers' participation in traditional working-class activities, "private ambitions have displaced social aspirations" and that the central task of modern socialism must be to combat this process of "privatization." Contrast this view with Crosland's dispassionate diagnosis: "'the elan of the rank and file is less and less essential to the winning of elections . . . and the traditional local activities, the door-to-door canvassing and the rest, are now largely a ritual. An accent on militancy would leave the Party still more isolated, introverted, and at odds with national opinion—with the fervor of a doctrinaire sect, not of a national party."

Mr. Crosland is probably right; in modern industrial societies, as distinct from the so-called underdeveloped areas, elections will be won by resourceful "orgmen" whose social visions and aims derive from their having closely affiliated themselves with modern society rather than by socialist prophets, by the inheritors of the Fabian tradition rather than by the heirs of William Morris, by appeals to private gains rather than to communal participation. Yet, one wonders, will not the domination of the socialist orgmen lead to a further disaffection of the young? A socialist movement which is no longer able to stimulate their imagination, which can no longer command their passionate allegiance, might one day find itself in a position akin to that of middle-aged settlement workers helplessly watching angry young men smash the efficiently designed modernistic furniture. . . .

One other matter needs to be briefly taken up: Crosland's quite inadequate consideration of the facts of power. To be sure, his New Left opponents incline toward a somewhat paranoid fear of the dark conspiracies

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of the Men of Power. But their simplified slogans do not justify Crosland's bland social engineering point of view, which tends to assume that since the proper Keynesian instruments from redistributive taxation to fiscal management and planning devices are at hand, one need not worry about the distribution of political and social power. Only give us the tools, he seems to argue, and we will be smart enough to manage things. In general, one suspects that he overestimates the powers of social intelligence—a not uncommon failing of intellectuals. Even the modest goals advocated by Crosland and his friends will require stronger measures than the play of disinterested intelligence and appeals to common decency. British business may have been tamed in the immediate postwar years, but it has regained power in the Tory decade of the 50's; and those who imagine that vested interests will passively submit to further restrictions will be in for a rude shock. And once the board rooms resound with indignant clamoring about these unsound chaps who wish to impose capital gains taxes and higher death duties, Mr. Crosland's friends will need to marshal power, not just good will. For only power can effectively challenge power. One need only look at what is happening to Crosland's Washington friends just now.

TWO YOUNG POETS

STAND UP, FRIEND, WITH ME. By EDWARD FIELD. *Grove Press. 77 pp. $2.50.*
FINAL SOLUTIONS. By FREDERICK SEIDEL. *Random House. 50 pp. $3.75.*

Reviewed by ROBERT W. FLINT

EDWARD FIELD'S first book, the Lamont Poetry Selection for 1963, appears when the author is thirty-nine; it is a thoroughly achieved job of work, offering forty-three poems genially poised, most of them, at the center of a restless, cocky, hard-bitten Manhattan existence. Mr. Field has been a musician (he performed with two of his sisters in the Field Family Trio), a navigator of Flying Fortresses, and lately seems to have had various office jobs and acting parts in off-Broadway and summer stock.

Mr. Field has Grove Press and *Evergreen Review* behind him, and socks us with blunt hints of a fashionably raffish ambi-sexuality in a long mock-heroic "Ode to Fidel Castro" (the best poem on Castro we are likely to have in English), and regularly uses "like" for "as," but he is still only a random tourist in beatdom, that fading paradise of the irrational. That real craziness, man, is not for this stubbornly secular, romantic-anti-romantic, self-mocking poet, whose taste runs closer to the rational comedy of Heine than to the vatic style of Ginsberg; Heine out of Cummings out of Delmore Schwartz.

Mr. Field sounds like one of the more amiable characters in a Malamud novel. He has that obstinate poetic prosiness, the more given to plain sense the more bedeviled he is by the abuses of sense that flourish in New York. He is goliardic, un-Byzantine, refreshing: he has a family, window-boxes, a tough time finding a decent apartment, a gift for describing animals, a trip to Greece. He is very much still *there,* after surviving a miserable childhood, and amazed by it.

After the war, poets could no longer get much mileage from the mere pathos of being intellectuals. Our new computer-manager society put an end to that. Even the astronauts in their uterine capsules are presented to us as brainchildren, dial-hungry and headphone-happy. So poets like Edward Field—of course there is no poet *quite* like Mr. Field—have had to make new explorations of American secularity, so much more attractive, it seems, to foreign literary tourists than to the princes of our own land. Nevertheless Mr. Field has won the Lamont prize and well deserves it. He is as bold as he need be without wishing to be a spokesman for much more than himself and his breed of urban cliffhanger. He likes to tell stories. He is Cummings's $I \times I$ fallen on slimmer times, perhaps—the typewriter looms as large as the bed. Auden has intervened and the Audenesque deflated fable, the punctured fairy-tale, which Mr. Field does with considerable brio. A livable New York survives in these poems.

MY MEMORY is erratic, but I can't recall another debut like that of Frederick Seidel in which a poet of solid gifts appeared so completely clothed in the mind, milieu, and rhetorical habits of another poet. In an excellent review in *The New York Review,*

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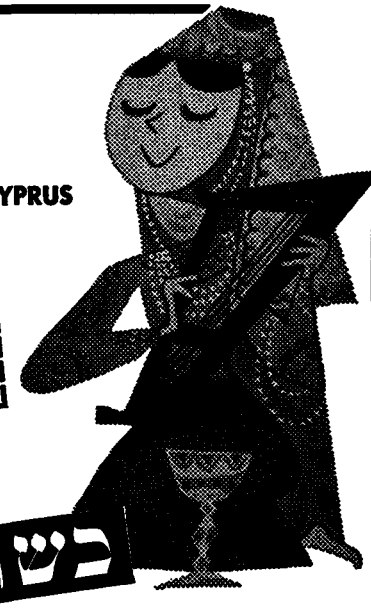

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Anthony Hecht tells us that the award that should have gone to this book was not granted, "through no fault of the jury" which chose it for the award, and speculates that "it was felt that some of the poems were dangerously indiscreet, and that others expressed shocking attitudes." If this is true, it is more fantastic than the failure of Edward Albee to win the Pulitzer Prize this year. But I doubt that matters were quite that simple, whatever the prize committee may have said. The truth is—and it's curious, outlandish, whatever you like—that Mr. Seidel at twenty-six or twenty-seven has decided to publish a piece of ventriloquism of great virtuosity. The poet "imitated" is Robert Lowell, one of the jury that passed on the manuscript, himself a very distinguished ventriloquist in his book of *Imitations*. How could Mr. Lowell in good conscience fail to praise these poems, which indeed he does in a handsome jacket testimonial, and how could anyone with even a bad conscience foment a *crise de moeurs* over Mr. Seidel's resuscitation of the Lowell universe? Is Mr. Seidel's dramatization, by means of dramatic monologues in the first and third persons, of various people at the end of their tethers, or almost, more shocking than Baudelaire's confessional revelations? Or are the words "penis" and "masturbate" the exclusive privilege of the sexual "scientists"? The possibility of this book being too shocking to reward with a literary prize is too absurd to think about.

Not shocking, then, but difficult in the way Lowell's superb *Imitations* is difficult, closer to home, with less curricular prestige behind it. By hewing so closely to what has become almost a convention—the Lowell world of an apocalyptic Boston ("To My Friend Anne Hutchinson"), Propertian Rome ("The Heart Attack"), a doom-haunted modern Europe ("A Year Abroad," "Americans in Rome"), childhood, and a brooding, dramatized pity for *la miseria* in general—and much more than that, by playing expert variations on Lowell's gutsy, allusive, learned, Latinate, fire-eating prosody and its virtuoso play with end-stopping by striking verbs and nouns within a long paragraph of run-on lines, its fondness for the grand style worked into the dramatic texture at appropriate moments, its love of

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apostrophe, exclamation, and incantation, Mr. Seidel has asked the reader to do considerably more work than a first book usually requires. Because he is distinctly *not* Robert Lowell, or he would not have risked this near-identification. He takes the Lowell corpus—Berryman may be an influence too, as Eliot certainly is—and uses it for all it is worth to come nearer to his past and his obsessions, to build a framework that will hold both the obsessions and their healing reflections in the past, and create their heroic image—to domesticate even Bellevue.

It is very much a young man's book, but one with great interest and promise.

REPORTS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

IN THE FIERY CONTINENT. By TOM HOPKINSON. *Doubleday. 348 pp. $4.95.*
INTO EXILE. By RONALD SEGAL. *McGraw-Hill. 319 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by JOHN THOMPSON

FOR FIFTEEN YEARS the Nationalist government of South Africa has been stamping heavily and clumsily down the road to hell. Dr. Verwoerd has always announced his intentions by word and deed as clearly as did his idol, Hitler. He has pushed the twelve million non-whites of his country steadily backward from bad to worse, taking from them their old rights to share, if they could, in the benefits of urban life, in government, marriage, church, school. Each step toward total *apartheid* has been protested by the opposition: the English-language newspapers, the white Liberal parties, the multiracial groups, the African National Congress. Those protests are nearly done with now, as the "final solution" draws near. The story of the last few unavailing years is told in these two books by men who were there, and who did their best.

Ronald Segal is the young scion of a rich Cape Town Jewish family. In 1956, he founded *Africa South,* the bold and vivid magazine that published much of the important journalism, scholarship, and propaganda of all southern Africa. During the years of the Treason Trial, which was probably the last attempt by the Nationalists to use legal forms against their enemies, and surely the last successful attempt of the opposition at legal resistance, Segal fought on despite the harassment and intimidation of the Afrikaaners, and the nervousness or indifference of the Jewish community. He believed that if the truth were told it must somehow count; he, and others like him, believed that even the government might listen. He worked at it for four years.

Tom Hopkinson went out to South Africa from London in 1958 to edit *Drum.* He was famous as the man who had run *Picture Post*; he wanted another magazine, and was willing to tackle this lively hodgepodge monthly for Africans, published in Johannesburg and also, by very remote control, in Accra and in Lagos. Hopkinson found a strange and wonderful crew of young reporters and photographers, a difficult management, a country nearing the end of its tether. Against the Nationalists he scored one beat after another. Against the charm and wayward habits of his reporters, he held to his conviction that he himself must remain an Englishman: "If you want a hundred-per-cent all-for-the-poor-African man, you've come to the wrong shop. . . . I came here to work with you, not to *be* you." He had something over two years to work with them.

On March 21, 1960, a few months after Macmillan's "wind of change" speech, South Africa came to the end of the road. In the town of Sharpeville a crowd had gathered to protest against the pass law. Without provocation or warning, the police opened fire with automatic weapons from armored cars. They killed or wounded 268 men, women, and children. Three out of four were shot in the back. A state of emergency was declared.

Segal got out, one jump ahead of a warrant. Hopkinson, although he had the news and picture scoop on Sharpeville, could not publish it. And he found his management wanted more crime and cheesecake, less offense to the government. He and Segal must have got to London about the same time.

These two in their different ways fought the black man's fight as best they could; neither pretends to be anything but a white man. There is no picture of the life of Africans in either book; neither man would claim he knew at all what it was. They had

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their own lives, determined for them in these years largely by the actions of the South African government. Segal, jaunty, brash, disarmingly insistent on the sources within his own impetuous character of his politics and his actions, tells how he went looking for trouble and found it. Hopkinson is contained, shrewd, quiet, and had trouble because he wanted to do his job. Neither of them is given to agonizing over himself. Both give rather detailed records of the good scores they habitually make in disputes. Both did much with their magazines and do much with these books to bring the facts about the South African situation before the world.

Sharpeville finished liberal South Africa. The Death for Sabotage Act of 1962, and the Publications and Entertainments Bill of 1963, put the seal on it; oddly enough, there was no internal censorship before. There is still no ban on sending manuscripts outside the country for publication. And it is still possible to go into exile, like Adam, like Dr. Mirò Cardona, like many good South Africans, black, white, and "colored." But the road of the future is probably now the underground route to the "final solution." It cannot be a short way to go. True, South Africans are now in Algeria studying the lessons to be learned there; and in the one month of November 1962, there were nineteen acts of sabotage by fire and dynamite. Meanwhile, rich from its exports of gold, the South African government is buying armored cars and tanks and jet planes, and stocking up oil.

We may wonder why, when surely the governments of the world are watching and waiting, we must always wait for the worst to happen. This has always been a hard lesson for exiles. Exiles have their stories to tell, and the world may listen; but power, in this world, replies only to power.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

MARVIN FOX, who teaches philosophy at Ohio State University, writes frequently on issues of Judaism.

RICHARD GILMAN, a new contributor, is the drama critic of *The Commonweal.*

LEWIS A. COSER reviewed Arthur Schlesinger's *The Politics of Hope* in our July issue. Mr. Coser teaches sociology at Brandeis University.

ROBERT W. FLINT is a well-known critic of contemporary poetry.

JOHN THOMPSON, another new contributor, is director of the Farfield Foundation.

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